



A Study of  
**GURU  
GRANTH  
SAHIB**

Doctrine, Social Content  
History, Structure and Status

**J.S. Grewal**

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**Singh Brothers**  
**Amritsar**



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STRUCTURE AND STATUS

by

J. S. GREWAL

#29, SECTOR 11, CHANDIGARH - 160 011

E-mail : jagtarsinghgrewal@yahoo.co.in

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*Dedicated*  
*to all those scholars and social scientists*  
*who see some meaning in*  
*what I write*



# Contents

<i>Preface</i>	9
<i>Glossary</i>	11
<i>Introduction</i>	29
 I. Social Awareness	 37-68
1. Social Order	37
2. Polity and Politics	46
3. The Brahmanical Tradition	50
4. The Ascetical Tradition	58
5. The Islamic Tradition	63
 II. Conception of God	 69-99
1. Unity, Power and Grace	69
2. The Guru	80
3. <i>Shabad-Bāṇī</i>	88
4. <i>Nām</i>	93
 III. Conception of Liberation	 100-133
1. Maya, <i>Mamṭā</i> and <i>Haumai</i>	101
2. The Sikh	107
3. Congregational Worship	113
4. <i>Ardās</i>	119
5. Liberation-in-Life	122
6. The <i>Bāṇī</i> of Guru Tegh Bahadur	126

IV. The Emerging Pañth	134-57
1. Guru Nanak: The Beginning	134
2. Guru Angad: Extension	137
3. Guru Amar Das: Emphasis on Distinction	140
4. Guru Ram Das: The House of Guru Nanak	145
5. Guru Arjan: <i>Halemī Rāj</i>	149
V. The Structure of the <i>Guru Granth Sāhib</i>	158-88
1. The Basic Arrangement	159
2. The <i>Bhagat Bāñī</i>	168
3. Compositions Other than <i>Gurbāñī</i> and <i>Bhagat Bāñī</i>	177
4. Promotion of <i>Halemī Rāj</i>	183
VI. The Guru Eternal	189-212
1. Early History	189
2. The <i>Guru Granth</i> in Relation to the Guru Pañth	196
3. The Case of the <i>Dasam Granth</i>	202
4. Dialogue with Others	204
VII. Thus Speaks the Guru	213-60
1. <i>Jaṇujī</i>	213
2. <i>So-Dar</i>	220
3. <i>So-Purkh</i>	222
4. <i>Sohilā</i>	223
5. <i>Āsā dī Vār</i>	225
6. <i>Anand</i>	239
7. <i>Lāvāñ</i>	247
8. <i>Sukhmanī</i>	249
<i>Bibliography</i>	261
<i>Index</i>	265

## Preface

Professor Prithipal Singh Kapur suggested to me that I should write a book on the *Guru Granth Sāhib* in commemoration of the tercentenary of the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib* in 1708. I mentioned this to Professor Indu Banga and Professor Gurinder Singh Mann and they liked the idea. I started thinking about the possible content of the book and discussed the possibilities with Professor Kapur. Six themes appeared to be the most relevant and I prepared on them a typescript of about 150 pages. Apart from Professor Kapur, I requested Professor Balkar Singh to read this typescript for suggestions. The revised draft was read by Professor Gurtej Singh, Professor Gurinder Singh Mann and Professor Indu Banga as well. I am thankful to them for their suggestions.

The most familiar composition of the Gurus have been used for selection and translation because of their peculiar significance. The glossary reflects my own understanding of the terms included, which in some instances may be different from the sense which is generally attached to them. There is no overt debate with others but the contents of this book do contradict or modify the views expressed by some other scholars. This book is meant to be a positive introduction to the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. It is not possible to comprehend the whole range of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, and this book reflects one understanding among others. Though short, it is comprehensive in its scope.

I am thankful to Professor Banga for an on-going discussion of the contents and format of the book. A young scholar, Karamjit K. Malhotra, has helped me by asking

questions which enabled me to clarify my ideas. Dr. Sheena Pall has helped me in preparing the glossary and the bibliography. Parneet Minhas has typed out several drafts with diligence and care. I am happy to acknowledge their help.

I am thankful to the Singh Brothers for bringing out this book in a short time, and with much care and personal attention to detail.

I have an apology to offer. There is a certain degree of repetition in the text. This is because I see some advantage in looking at the same evidence from different perspectives.

Chandigarh

J. S. GREWAL

15 January, 2009

## Glossary

*āb* : water in Persian, it figures prominently in Guru Nanak's idea of the creation of life.

*abchal* : stable, everlasting.

*abchal nagarī* : eternal city (for the everlasting dispensation of Guru Nanak).

*abbai dān* : fearlessness as an element in liberation through God's grace.

*ād purkh* : the primal being, an epithet for God.

*abankār* or *bankār* : pride of possessions or power.

*aṁṁī* : one who never takes birth, who does not incarnate; an attribute of God.

*akāl* : not subject to death or destruction, everlasting, eternal, God.

*alakh* : unseeable, God.

*alīpt* : unattached, detached from creation, God.

*amr* : order, used generally for a royal order; a metaphor for divine ordinance; immortal.

*amrapad* : the state of immortality, an everlasting state; used for the state of liberation in Sikh thought.

*amrit* : the drink that imparts immortality or everlasting life, nectar; used as a metaphor.

*amrit-bachan* : the nectar-like utterance of the Guru, the Guru's *shabad*.

*amrit-bāṁī* : the nectar-like utterance of the Guru, the Guru's *shabad*, divine utterance (for God's creation).

*amrit-nām* : the nectar-like name of God, the Name that imparts immortality.

*anabad bāṁī* : the utterance that leads to liberation, divine self-revelation, the utterance of the Guru, the Guru's *shabad*.

*anabad shabad* : the unspoken word that is heard in the state of liberation, the state of being one with God.

*anand* : happiness, bliss, experienced in the state of liberation.

*anbhai* : without fear, fearless in the state of liberation.



- anbhau nagar* : the city in which there is no fear; the state of liberation; a metaphor for Guru Nanak's dispensation.
- anbhau pad* : the state without fear, the state of liberation.
- aṅg* : a part, a limb; an inseparable part.
- aṅjan māhi niraṅjan* : pure amidst impurity, detached.
- āntarjāmi* : one who knows the inner most thoughts, an epithet for God.
- āp chhor jīvat marai* : discarding the self and thereby dying while alive, alive to the divine presence and divine will.
- ārati* : the rite of offering food, fruit, flowers and fragrance to a deity, generally an idol; a hymn of praise.
- ardās* : entreaty, supplication, prayer; generally made by the Sikh *saṅgat*, standing with hands folded in the presence of the Formless God; an essential part of worship in the Sikh tradition.
- āsā māhi nirās* : without hope amidst hope, detached from personal interests but attached to God.
- ashtpadī* : a composition of eight *padas* or verses.
- aṭal* : immoveable, stable, an epithet for God.
- aukhad* : medicine; used for the Guru's *shabad* and the divine name.
- auliyā* : plural of *wali*, a friend of God; used for eminent Sufis and even for a single Sufi to underscore his great importance.
- avadhūt* : an ascetic who has attained a high spiritual status.
- ayānā* : a child or a young person, one who has no knowledge.
- Bābur-bānī* : the verses of Guru Nanak related to Babur, popularly believed to have been composed on the sack of Eminabad by Babur, but actually expressing Guru Nanak's response to political change.
- bādsbāh* : also *pātsbāh*, king, emperor, generally used for a Mughal ruler and metaphorically for God and the Gurus.
- bairāg* : the feeling of separation from God seen as a mark of spiritual awakening.
- bairāgī* : the person who practises *bairāg*, a renunciant; generally a Vaishanva; used also for the Sikh and even God as a metaphor (as in *rassik bairāgī*).
- Bais* : the Punjabi form of Vaishya, the third caste in the hierarchical four-fold *varna* order.
- bājīgar* : from the Persian *bāzīgar*, a juggler; used as a metaphor for God.

*bandā* : a slave; a devotee of God.

*bandagī* : the state of slavery, acting as a slave; total submission to God as the only Master, devotion, worship.

*bāṇī* : utterance; used for divine self-revelation through creation and the utterance or the word of the Guru; generally equated with *Gurbāṇī*.

*bāṇī-shabad* : utterance and the word; generally used for *Gurbāṇī*.

*bāṇiā* : one who conducts trade, generally a shopkeeper or a merchant.

*baoli* : a well with steps for easy accessibility to water simultaneously for several persons; the well constructed by Guru Amar Das at Goindval, which came to be regarded as sacred.

*barat* : vow; fasting, in various ways on different occasions, regarded as meritorious in the Brahmanical systems, like *rozab* in the Islamic tradition.

*beobār* : convention, conventional social behaviour in specific situations, sanctified by long usage.

*bhagat* : one who is devoted to God; used generally for Vaishnava *bhaktas*, but the term is used for the Sikh too in *Gurbāṇī*.

*bhagat-jan* : the devoted ones; used for the Sikhs too in *Gurbāṇī*.

*bhagti* : also bhakti, loving devotion and dedication to God.

*bhagti-jog* : the path of bhakti that leads to union with God.

*bhai-bhañjan* : the breaker of fear; God.

*bhajan* : a song in praise of God, singing of God's praises; uttering God's name.

*bhāṇā* : pleasure, wish; the divine pleasure, everything that occurs due to God's will.

*bhau* or *bhai* : fear; fear of God, awe.

*bhekh* : garb, a particular kind of outward appearance as a mark of identity, generally of a religious person.

*bhekh-dhārī* : one who adopts a garb; the various categories of persons indicating their religious affiliation by some outward marks.

*bhog* : enjoyment, enjoyment of life; the rite performed after death; the Sikh practice was to recite and sing *Gurbāṇī* on such occasions.

*bbram* : illusion, the illusion that earthly things are everlasting, not to realize that God alone is eternal.

- Bhūpat* : master of the earth, ruler of a territory, a ruler.
- bibhūt* : the ashes used by ascetics to smear their bodies, a practice common among the Gorakhnathi jogīs.
- bibisht* : the Islamic term for Paradise popularly conceived as a place with streams of honey and pleasures of the most beautiful females.
- bikhiā māhi udās* : detached amidst the poison of maya or earthly attachments and pleasures.
- birbā* : the feeling of separation regarded as sublime among Sūfis and also by the Gurus as a mark of spiritual awakening in contrast with the pangs of separation from a mortal.
- brahm-giān* : knowledge of Brahm, realization of God, experience of God leading to the state of liberation.
- brahm-giānī* : the person who has knowledge of God, has realized God, has experienced God leading to the state of liberation.
- brahmachārī* : a celibate, a person who belongs to the group of religious persons called *Brahmachārīs*.
- brahmaṇḍ* : the universe, cosmos.
- Brahmpurī* : the city of Brahma.
- chākari* : service with or without wages, the profession of a soldier and also of a person who serves for subsistence.
- chakvi* : a bird that loves the sun and dies to meet it.
- chandāl* : the lowest category of outcastes, generally employed as executioners; a person totally devoid of mercy.
- chātrik* : the rain-bird that survives on the drops of rain and dies without rain.
- chaṭsāl* : the place where elementary education was imparted, generally by Brahman *pādhās*, used as a metaphor for the Sikh congregation.
- chalulā* : bright like the red flower; used as a metaphor for being dyed in the love of God.
- chaukā* : a square drawn on the ground and plastered with cowdung generally by a Brahman for eating food with the idea that all impurities would be kept out.
- chaur* : a fly-whisk used as a symbol of royalty or great position.
- chauthā pad* : the state of experience of the presence of attributeless God who is beyond all three qualities (*gunas*) of materiality, also called *surin*.
- chhant* : a lyrical composition.

*chirī vicbhuṇe* : separated for a long time; reference to the state before the beginning of the cycle of transmigration (carrying the implication that there is a divine element within all human beings that remains concealed and un-realized).

*chūhrā* : a scavenger, a class of untouchables.

*darvesh* : a religious person, a *sūfī*.

*dars* : sight, sight of the divine, seeing God.

*darsban* : the same as *dars*, sight, sight of the divine, seeing God.

*Dasamī* : the tenth day of the lunar month regarded sacred by Brahmans.

*dātā* : the giver, the giver of all gifts, God.

*dayā* : compassion, mercy, grace.

*des* : country, the real country, God's country (in contrast with the earth as a place of sojourn).

*dhāḍhī* : a singer who generally used a miniature drum (*ḍhaḍh*) while singing of love or war for the entertainment of his patrons; used as a metaphor for the Guru as the singer of God's praises and also for his Sikh.

*dhāṇak* : the lowest category of untouchables, like the *chanḍāl*, who ate all kinds of meat for subsistence.

*dharm* : a whole complex of religious and social ideas and practices; used for the dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors.

*dharma* : a set of religious beliefs, and social practices prescribed for each *varna* of the Brahmanical ideal of *varnāshrama*.

*dharm khaṇḍ* : the state of the realization of truth in which God's *bukam* is seen operative everywhere.

*dharmśāl* : the earth as the place for earning merit; the place where the Sikhs came together for congregational worship in the time of Guru Nanak; the Sikh sacred space (called *gurdwara*, later) marked by *kīrtan*, *kathā*, *ardās* and *langar*.

*dhīān* : contemplation, reflection, concentration of the mind; meditation on God and the Guru's *shabad*.

*dhotī* : the spotless sheet worn by the Brahman round the waist to conduct religious worship.

*dhundūkārā* : the state of darkness in which only the Primal Being and his power existed and there was no other creation, equated with *sunṁ* or the void before creation.

*dīn-dayāl* : one who is kind to the meek and the powerless; God.

*dīwān* : an office, a court, a royal court; the person holding the position next to that of the king in his realm.

*dukh* : suffering inherent in existence without attaining the state of liberation.

*dūje bhāi* : affiliation with *māyā* and not with God; a way other than the true worship of God.

*durmat* : an understanding of one's own, marked by many limitations in the absence of the Guru's instruction (*gurmat*).

Duādasi : the twelfth day of the lunar month regarded sacred by Brahmans.

*dubidhā* : duality, dual affiliation, the tension between affiliation to *māyā* and devotion to God.

*dubāgan* : a woman who is unhappy because she is not loved by her spouse; a metaphor for the person who has not turned to God through the Guru.

*duin* : fine as a form of penalization; used also for the punishment awarded by God for one's misdeeds in life.

*eh chāl nīrālī gurmukhī* : the distinct path of those who follow the path of the Guru.

Ekādasi : the eleventh day of the lunar month regarded sacred by Brahmans for fasting.

*faqir* : one who practises *faqir* or renunciation and austerities; a *darvesh*.

*farmān* : an injunction, an order; a royal order; divine ordinance.

*foṭādār* : the person in charge of a treasury; a treasurer.

*gāyatrī* : the verses of the *Rigveda* which are often recited by Brahmans by way of prayer.

*geet* : a secular song; a song sung on the occasion of a marriage.

*ghar hī māhi udās* : detached in the home; inward detachment; an attitude of detachment while performing one's personal and social duties.

*gharī* : one sixtieth of a day, equal to 24 minutes.

*ghee* : clarified butter, regarded as rich food.

*ghorī* : a song sung on the occasion of marriage when the bridegroom rides a mare to depart for wedding; a composition meant to be sung on such an occasion.

*giān* : knowledge, knowledge of God; enlightenment.

*giān khaṇḍ* : the state in which one's knowledge and understanding of the physical and moral world has expanded and one's sympathies have widened.

*giānī* : the person who has acquired *giān*.

*greb kuṭumb mabī sadā udās* : always detached amidst family and the home (the ideal of a Sikh householder).

*gunī* : with qualities or attributes, God with attributes.

*gurduwārā* : the *guru*'s door, the Sikh sacred space where *kīrtan* and *kathā* are performed, *ardās* is made, and community meal is cooked and eaten by all.

*Gur-giān* : knowledge imparted by the Guru; the path and the goal shown by the Guru and successfully pursued by the Sikh.

*Gur kī sākhī* : testimony or instruction of the Guru.

*Gur ke shabad jivat marai* : one may die while alive through the Guru's *shabad* (by getting rid of *haumai*).

*gur-manītar* : the *manītar* given by the *guru*, *nām* or *shabad* of the Guru.

*Gurvāk* : the Guru's *vāk* or statement, regarded as an order by the Sikhs.

*Guru kā bachan* : the Guru's order or statement (*shabad*).

*guru* : a teacher; used in the Sikh tradition for Guru Nanak and his nine successors upto Guru Gobind Singh, and the *Granth Sāhib* in continuation with them.

*Guru kā bhāṇā* : what pleases the Guru; his order.

*Guru kā shabad* : the words uttered by the Guru and recorded as sacred.

*Gur kī kār* : the Guru's work; his service; everything done in accordance with the Guru's instruction.

*gurmāt* : the Guru's instruction, the Guru's wisdom; Sikh philosophy of life as a whole.

*gur-saṅgat* : association with the Guru; the Guru's followers; a congregation in which the Guru is present.

*Gur-shabad* : the Guru's words recorded as sacred.

*Gursikh* : the Guru's instruction; the Guru's follower; the Sikh of the Guru; the Sikh.

*gurupdes* : the Guru's instruction, generally in the form of his *shabad*.

*Gurprasādi* : through the Guru's grace.

*hājī* : one who has performed the hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca; generally regarded with respect and consideration by other Muslims.

*haqīqat* : reality; the path of truth, the Sūfī path.

*Har-jaṇ* : God's devotee; used for both the Guru and the Sikh.

*Har kā nām* : the name of God; the Name.

*Har-kāthā* : a story related to God; singing God's praises; an exposition of Sikh theology.

*Har-nām* : the name of God, the divine name.

*Har kā chākar* : the servant of God; used for both the Guru and the Sikh.

*Har kā des* : the divine country; God's abode as the real home for human beings as opposed to their false homes on the earth.

*Har ke log* : the people of God; the devotees of God; the Sikhs.

*halemī rāj* : rule of moderation in which there is no oppression or coercion; an expression used by Guru Arjan for the entire dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors.

*haram* : a forbidden place; the female quarters in a house or a palace.

*haṭh* : something pursued with consistency amounting to obstinacy; used for a form of *yoga* in which hard austerities, celibacy and total renunciation were practised by the followers of Gorakhnath.

*haumai* : a kind of selfcentredness in which everything is attributed to oneself to the exclusion of God's power and His *bukam*.

*hom* : a sacrificial act; the ceremony of chanting Vedic hymns around a fire kept burning with oblations of wood, *ghee*, incense and other such materials, regarded as a way of pleasing gods or God through the god of fire.

*bukam* : order, divine order; the principle that the power of God remains operative all the time in the physical and moral world.

*bukamnāmā* : a written order; generally used for a letter of the person exercising moral and spiritual authority, like the Guru, relating mostly to mundane matters.

*ik* : one; the figure '1' used for emphasis on the Oneness of God as '1 *Oaṅkār*'

*Indrapuri* : the city of Indra.

*jagat jalandā* : the world on fire due to *māyā*, *maṃtā* and *haumai* and the misery of transmigration.

*jāgātī* : a tax collector on behalf of the state; used also for the messenger of *Jam* or personified Death, called *Jam-doot*.

*jagg* or *yagya*, the ceremony of sacrifice to the fire amidst chanting of Vedic hymns to please gods or God through the god of fire, Agni.

*jajmān* : the patron in a client-patron relationship; the person who makes payment for services rendered manually or by performing a ritual, like the marriage ceremony performed by a Brahman.

*janeū* or *janjū* : the sacred thread worn by higher caste men after the formal ritual performed by a Brahman.

*jaṅgam* : a category of the ascetical followers of Shiva and Gaurī, conspicuous for their garb.

*jap* : recitation, used in connection with *nām* or a sacred scripture.

*jāt* or *jāṭi* : an endogamous group, constituted by a number of septs, following generally the same occupation and placed in one of the four varnas as a mark of its social position in relation to others, popularly called 'caste' in English.

*jāt-baran* : an endogamous group placed in hierarchical order in relation to other such groups.

*jīvat-marai* : one who dies while still alive.

*jīvat marai, marai phun jīvai* : one who dies while alive and lives again (there is a new kind of life after *baumai* is eradicated).

*jīvatīā mar rabīe* : remain dead in life (by eradicating *baumai*).

*jīvat-marnā* : to be dead in life.

*jīvan-muktā* : liberated-in-life.

*jīvan-muktī* : liberation-in-life.

*jīt duāre ubre tete lehu ubār* : whatever the way, may God redeem the world.

*jizya* : a tax paid by non-Muslims as the people of the book in accordance with the Islamic law (*sharī'at*).

*joban* : youth, (as an obstacle on the path of liberation for both men and women).

*jogī* : one who pursues *yoga*, especially the follower of Gorakhnath.

*jot* : light, the divine light that is in everyone.

*kādar* (from *qādir*) : all-powerful, God.

*Kaliyuga* : the fourth of the cosmic ages, traditionally regarded as the age of degeneration but, in Sikh thought, redeemed by Guru Nanak's dispensation.

*kalmā* : a word, saying, discourse; the confession of faith in Islam : 'there is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is God's messenger' (*la-ilāh illāh Muḥammad ar-rasūlillāh*).



- kām* : desire, sexual desire; sexual indulgence.
- kāraj*, also *kāj* : work, task; performance of marriage.
- karm* : an action or deed that becomes relevant for transmigration or release from the cycle; kindness, mercy or grace (in Persian).
- karm-dharm* : the duties prescribed for members of the four *varnas* in specific situations.
- karm-kāṇḍ* : performance of appropriate ritual on specific occasions.
- karam khaṇḍ* : the state in which one is strengthened in one's resolve to act for the general welfare through divine grace.
- karnī* : the actual conduct in opposition to mere profession (*kathnī*).
- kartā* : the doer, the only doer, God.
- kartār* : the sole doer, God.
- kasumbh* : the plant with bright flowers which serve as a fading dye.
- kateb* : the books, the scriptures (of semitic faiths).
- khāk* : earth, dust.
- khān* : a title given to a member of the ruling class in medieval India, especially under the Sultanate of Delhi.
- khaṇḍ* : one of the nine regions of the earth.
- khatri* : the member of an endogamous group consisting of a large number of *gotras* in the Punjab generally believed to be descendants of the old *kshatriyas* who had taken to trade, shop keeping, soldiering and administration in later times.
- khaṭṭī* : profit, profit in trade.
- kheḍ* : game, sport, pastime; used for Guru Gobind Singh's interest in ancient literature to inspire people for a righteous war (*dharmyudh*).
- khinṭhā* : the cloak of the Gorakhnathi *jogī* which distinguished him from other ascetics.
- kirpā* : kindness, grace.
- kirsānī* : cultivation of land, farming.
- kirtam nām* : the names of God related to His attributes as the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe.
- kīrtan* : singing of the praises of God; singing of *Gurbāṇī* in a congregation of Sikhs.
- kiryā* : performance of rites prescribed for a particular occasion.
- krodh* : anger as one of the five adversaries of human beings.

- kuchajjī* : a woman who has no merit or manners.
- kul* : a family extending over several generations, lineage.
- lagan* : the auspicious time for betrothal.
- lābhā* : profit, profit from trade.
- lāl* : red (the fast colour of *majīṭh*).
- langar* : community kitchen; the open kitchen in a Sikh *dbarmsāl*.
- lāvān* : the four *shabads* of Guru Ram Das meant to be recited at each of the four rounds in a marriage ceremony.
- lobh* : greed, avarice.
- lok* : a world.
- mabūrat* : auspicious time, especially for marriage.
- mabzar* : an affidavit by a number of people testifying to the veracity of a statement for legal purposes.
- majīṭh* : the dye prepared from *majīṭh* (madder) for fast red colour.
- māl* : riches, wealth, material possessions.
- malik* : title given to a member of the aristocracy.
- mamtā* : the feeling of a mother for the child; attachment with kith and kin.
- maṇḍā* : bad, inferior.
- manmukh* : self-centred; one who thinks of his own inclinations as opposed to the *Gurmukh* who follows the Guru's instruction and cares for others as well.
- manītar* : the Name in *Gurbānī*.
- mantra* : a verse, a sacred verse; an initiatory formula; a magical formula.
- mantrī* : (also *māndrī*) : one who recites *mantras* or magical words.
- mar jīvīā* : one who has eradicated *haumai* and died to self to live a regenerated life.
- mar mar jīvai* : one who dies to self to live a regenerated life.
- marbī* : the spot where a corpse has been cremated, sometimes with a small structure raised over it for lighting a lamp.
- māri'fat* : knowledge, divine knowledge; the highest state of spiritual progress in Sufi theosophy.
- masān* : a corpse; the place where corpses are cremated; a sepulture raised over a spot of cremation.
- māṭī* : earth, dust.
- maulā* : master, God.
- maun-dbārī* : one who observes silence as a part of austerities.

*māyā* : all creation, all earthly things; seen as the source of entanglement in the cycle of death and rebirth; subject to destruction, in contrast with the creator.

*mehtā* : the headman of a village or a part thereof.

*mīharvān* : merciful, the merciful God.

*milan* : meeting, union with God.

*mībr* : kindness, mercy, grace.

*mīr* : temporal leader, the head of a clan, the head of a state.

*malechh* : unclean, untouchable; used also for a person who did not belong to the Brahmanical *varna* order; an outsider.

*moh* : affection, love, attachment to kith and kin.

*mokh dwārā* : the door of liberation.

*monī* : an ascetic who observes silence.

*Nānak mue tinī na ākhī-āih je Guru ke sabad samāhe* : do not call them dead who are absorbed in the Guru's *shabad* and died to the self.

*mukt* : liberated.

*muktā* : the liberated one.

*muktī* : liberation.

*muktī paṁth* : the path that leads to liberation, used for the dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors.

*mullā* : an orthodox Muslim, generally in charge of a mosque.

*muṁdāvaṇī* : a riddle, a popular form of composition in the Punjab.

*muqaddam* : the headman of a village or a part thereof.

*mūrati* : form, picture.

*nād* : a horn, a musical instrument; music.

*nād-ved* : the horn and the Vedic knowledge, symbolic of the ascetical and the Brahmanical tradition in India.

*nadar* : from *nazr* in Persian, sight, a kind glance, grace; one of the most important attributes of God.

*nāib* : a deputy, the provincial governor as a deputy of the ruler.

*nām* : the name, the name of God; the transcendent and immanent God; the whole creation; the Guru's *shabad*, *Gurbāṇī*.

*nām, dān, isnān* : these three terms embody the essential ideas of Guru Nanak for the Sikh way of life : worship through the Name, contribution from rightful earning towards the welfare of others, physical and moral purity.

*nām-dharm* : the path of the Name as laid down by Guru Nanak.

*nām japṇā* : to repeat the name of God.

*nām-mārg* : the path of the Name as distinct from others.

*Nām-simran* : remembrance of God's Name; meditation on the Name.

*namāz* : one of the five daily prayers in Islam.

*Naumī* : the ninth day of the lunar month regarded sacred by Brahmins.

*naunidh* : the nine treasures symbolic of the best possible gifts.

*nīch jāt* : a person who belongs to the lowest caste in the *varna* order, generally used for an outcaste.

*nībchal rāj* : stable rule; the divine order; also a metaphor for the dispensation of Guru Nanak.

*nīndak* : a back-biter, a slanderer; one who talks ill of the Guru.

*niranjān* : without impurity, God.

*nirāṅkāri* : one who believes in the Formless God and worships Him alone; a Sikh.

*nirbhau* : without fear, fearless; one who has no fear of death; an attribute of God who is eternal.

*nirgun* : without qualities, without attributes; the primal state of God before creation.

*nirmal* : absolutely pure, with no trace of impurity.

*nirvair* : without enmity; an attribute of God; also a trait of the Guru.

*oāṅkāṛ* : the only eternal God.

*pādhā* : a Brahman teacher.

*pad-nirbān* : the state of release or liberation.

*pahar* : one-eighth of a day, equal to three hours.

*paighambar* : the messenger of God or the prophet in the Islamic tradition, the line ending with the Prophet Muhammad.

*pakhāwaj* : a musical instrument like a drum.

*palī* (from *palid*) : a person who incurs a sin and thereby becomes impure.

*pañcha* : a member of the committee of five (*pañchāyat*) representing a larger group of people; a member of the village *pañchāyat* which exercises authority on behalf of the village community.

*pandit* : a learned Brahman.

*pandit-jotkī* : a Brahman astrologer.

*pardes* : a strange country; this world where one lives for a short while.

*pardesī* : a stranger, an outsider; a person who knows that his real country is the next world and, therefore, remembers all the time that he has to leave this world.

*parm-pad* : the prime state, the state of liberation.

*parnālī* : a tradition of exegesis created by a line of expounders.

*parupkār* : something done for others.

*parupkārī* : one who does something for others; an epithet for God; also used for the Guru and his Sikh.

*pārjāt* : a mythical tree that is believed to fulfil all the wishes of its possessor.

*pātsbāhī* : (from *bādsbāhī*) : rulership; a metaphor for the tenure of the Guru in the early Sikh tradition.

*patri* : the book used by the Brahman astrologer to determine auspicious or inauspicious time for a particular purpose.

*pattal* : a tree leaf used as a plate.

*paurī* : a stanza.

*piṇḍ* : a ball of rice for feeding Brahmins as a part of mortuary rites.

*pīr* : the guide for the Sūfī path in a *khānqāh*; a *shaikh* who is no longer alive but his tomb has become a place of pilgrimage for the people who believe in his power to confer blessings.

*potdārī* : (from *foṭādārī*), the position or office of the treasurer.

*prasād* : grace; also sacred food.

*pūjā* : worship, ritual worship of an idol.

*pun* : a virtuous act in the Brahmanical tradition.

*pūrā guru* : the perfect Guru; God as the Guru; Guru Nanak.

*purkh* : a person; used for God to clarify that God in the Sikh tradition is not an impersonal reality as in the Vedānta.

*qāzī* : the person who pronounces judgement on the basis of the provisions of the *sharī'at* as expounded by a *muftī*; an important official in the administration of justice under Turko-Afghan and Mughal rule.

*qudrat* : power, power shown by God in His creation; the divine power behind all that happens; an expression of God's power.

*rahīm* : one who shows mercy, God.

*rahit* : the actual conduct of life regarded by Guru Nanak and his successors as far more important than verbal professions of faith.

*raī'yat* : the subject people in a monarchical rule; the common people.

*rāj* : rule, rulership; metaphor for the temporal concerns of the Gurus as an essential part of their idea of regeneration.

*Rāja* : a ruler.

*rājān* : rulers; the elite.

*rāj-jog* : a position or a system in which temporal and spiritual concerns are seen as two sides of the same ideology.

*Rām-jan* : the devotees of God; God's people.

*Rām-nām* : the name of God.

*Rānā* : a petty chief reduced to the position of an intermediary between the ruler of the state and his subjects in a given territory; the descendant of a Rānā.

*Rāo* : a chief reduced to the status of a subordinate by a superior ruler; a descendant of a Rāo.

*ras* : juice, pleasure.

*rasāyan* : the alchemical substance believed to turn a base metal into gold; a metaphor for the agency of transformation, like *nām*.

*razā* : wish, God's will.

*rūp* : form; a beautiful form; the beauty of a woman.

*sabad maro phir jīvo sad hī* : die in the *shabad* and live for ever.

*Sachch* : truth, the truth of God who alone is true in the sense of being eternal.

*sachch khañḍ* : the state in which truth is realized and one can see the divine ordinance (*bukam*) operative everywhere in the physical and the moral world.

*Sachchā Sāhib* : the True Master, God.

*sāchau takht* : the true throne, the divine court.

*sachchī sangat* : the true association; the Sikh congregation for worship.

*sadā-badūra* (from *buzūr*) : ever present, God.

*sadā-subāgan* : the woman whose spouse is always alive (and she never becomes a widow); used for the person who has turned to God through the Guru.

*Sadd* : call; a composition on the theme, the call of death.

*sādh* : a pious person; a devotee of God; the Guru; the Sikh of the Guru.

*sādhik* : a person who practices austerities.

- sādhū* : *sādh*; used for the Guru, and the Sikh.
- sādhū-jan* : the Guru; the Sikhs.
- sādiq* : one who is absolutely sincere and steadfast.
- sabaj* : a state in which there is no hurry and no tension; the state of liberation as a state of bliss.
- sabaj-jog* : the path through which *sabaj* is pursued and attained; the path of Guru Nanak and his successors.
- sābu* : a *sābūkār* who advances or lends money to traders who remain accountable to him; a metaphor for God.
- saimbhu* : self-existent, God.
- sālār* : the leader, the commander; the commander of an army.
- sālik* : a traveller, a traveller on the Sūfi path.
- sāndhyā* : evening worship.
- sāṅg* : impersonation; a character in a theatrical performance.
- saṅgat* : association of persons; used for the Sikh congregation.
- sañjam* : restraint and moderation.
- saṅt* : a pious person; a devotee of God; the Guru; the Sikh.
- saṅt-jan* : the Sikhs.
- saṅt sabhā* : the congregation of the Guru and his Sikhs.
- sanyāsī* : a Shaiva renunciant who practises austerities; (there were different orders of the Shaiva *sanyāsīs*).
- saram khaṇḍ* : the state in which one works for the welfare of others.
- sargun* : with attributes, God; generally but misleadingly used for Vaishnava bhakti in which Vishnu's human incarnations are the objects of worship.
- sarrāf* : a jeweller, who knows the difference between the true and the false coin; God.
- Satguru* : the true Guru, used for God, and for Guru Nanak and his successors.
- Satgur bachan* : the word or order of the true Guru.
- sat-nām* : the true name; God in the transcendent state for whom the only epithet that can be used is 'true' (*sachch* or *satt*).
- sat-saṅgat* : the true association; the Sikh congregation.
- satt* : *sachch*, the truth.
- savayyā* : a poem written in praise, a kind of eulogy.
- sev* or *sevā* : service; service of God; service of the Guru; service of the Sikhs; service of others.
- sevak* : one who serves; a devotee of God; a follower of the Guru.

*shabad* : the word; divine self-revelation through creation; a composition of the Guru.

*shabad marai* : if one dies in the *shabad* (one lives for ever).

*shahīd* : a martyr in the Muslim tradition as an object of veneration, with his tomb as a place of pilgrimage.

*shaikh* : the guide on the Sūfi path, also called *pīr*, and generally having a *khānqāh* where his disciples learn and pursue the path as a regular discipline.

*shalok* : generally a couplet, but can be much longer.

*shāntī* : peace, as a characteristic of the state of liberation.

*tāl* : rhythm in music.

*tankhā* : used for salary (*tankhāh*) in Mughal usage but in the Sikh tradition for penance prescribed for a default in the light of the Sikh *rabit*.

*tap* : practice of austerities.

*tapsī* : one who practises *tap* or austerities.

*tariqat* : the Sūfi path as distinguished from the *sharī'at* though not necessarily opposed to it.

*tarpan* : offerings as a part of ritual.

ten directions (*deh-disā*) : east, west, north, south, north-east, south-east, south-west, north-west, sky, under-world.

three *gūnas* : three qualities or characteristics known as *rajo*, *tamo* and *sato*, which determine temperament; collectively called *trikuṭī*.

three worlds (*trilok*) : the heaven, the earth and the nether-regions; the entire universe.

*tīrath* : a sacred place, a place of pilgrimage.

*trikuṭī* : combination of the three qualities (*gunas*) which remain an obstacle in the path of liberation, all being material and not spiritual.

*turiavasthā* : a term of yoga used in *Gurbānī* for the state of liberation.

*udās* : detached.

*udāsī* : one who practises detachment.

*ulamā* : plural of *ālīm*, a learned person; a person adept in Islamic learning.

*umarā* : plural of *amīr*, a member of the ruling class.

*updes* : instruction, teaching, homily.

*uttam jāt* : the highest caste in the *varna* order.



*uttam paṁth* : the superior path.

*vaid* : a physician.

*vāk* : an utterance; the words spoken by the Guru.

*vāk lainā* : to open the *Guru Granth Sāhib* at random for the 'order' of the Guru in any given situation or for the day.

*vanjārā* : a trader; a trader who works for a *sābhūkār* or borrows money from him for trade.

*vapārī* : a trader.

*varna* : literally 'colour', used for each of the fourfold hierarchical social order of the Brahmanical tradition, generally referred to as caste.

*vich āsā hoi nirāsi* : one who has no ambition for oneself but has a firm conviction that everything would be set right by God.

*vichai greh udās* : detached within the home.

*wājā* : a musical instrument.

*wazīfā* : a religious duty, uttering God's praises.

## Introduction

S. Radhakrishnan, the philosopher President of India, says that the Sikh Gurus had the noble quality of appreciating 'whatever was valuable in other religious traditions'. They did not claim to teach a new doctrine. Indeed, Guru Nanak simply 'elaborated the views of the Vaishnava saints'.<sup>1</sup> However, several scholars have pointed out that the Gurus claim to have uttered the divine word.<sup>2</sup> The visionary Puran Singh was convinced that no book for the Sikhs is equal to the *Granth Sāhib*.<sup>3</sup> Arnold Toynbee, the historian of world civilizations, observes that the *Ādi Granth* means more to the Sikhs than even the *Qur'ān* to Muslims, the *Bible* to Christians, and the *Torah* to Jews. It is a heritage of special value for the world.<sup>4</sup>

Interpretation of Guru Nanak's *bāṇī* began early with the compositions of his successors and has continued upto the present day. Professor Taran Singh talks of seven traditions followed by still others. The first was the *Sabai Parnālī* represented by Guru Nanak and his successors. Bhāi Gurdas represented the *Bhāi Parnālī*, and the *Parmārth Parnālī* was represented by Miharban, Harji and Chaturbhuj, the descendants of Prithi Chand, the elder brother of Guru Arjan. For the *Udāsī Parnālī*, Taran Singh mentions Anandghan and Sada Nand. Among the eight representatives of the *Nirmala Parnālī* are Bhāi Santokh Singh, Pandit Tara Singh Narotam and Giāni Giān Singh. In the *Sampardāi Parnālī* are Bhāi Mani Singh, Giāni Badan Singh, Bhāi Jodh Singh, and ten others. Among the eight representatives of *Singh Sabbhāi Parnālī* were Bhāi Vir Singh, Professor Teja Singh and Professor Sahib Singh. Thus, there

is a vast range of literature on the exegesis of *Guru Granth Sāhib*.<sup>5</sup>

European scholars of the *Granth Sāhib* appeared on the scene with the extension of colonial rule to the Punjab in the nineteenth century. The *Ādi Granth* of Ernest Trumpp offended Sikh sensibilities both because of its contemptuous tone and wrong interpretation of the *Granth Sāhib*. Trumpp's work was followed by that of Max Arthur Macauliffe as a corrective, published by the Clarendon Press in six volumes in 1909 as *The Sikh Religion : Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*.<sup>6</sup> Apart from the repugnance of the German missionary for a non-Christian faith, Macauliffe refers to the cooperation of a number of Sikh scholars, notably Bhāi Kahn Singh of Nabha. His work has remained acceptable to the Sikhs.

Sikh scholars had begun to respond to this new situation by the beginning of the twentieth century. Some of them wrote in English to project their understanding of the Sikh tradition for both Sikhs and non-Sikhs, like Sewaram Singh, Bhagat Lakshman Singh and Khazan Singh. Giāni Badan Singh prepared a commentary on the *Granth Sāhib* for publication under the patronage of Maharaja Bikram Singh of Faridkot as a corrective to Trumpp's work. Giāni Badan Singh makes it clear that the exposition of *Guru Granth Sāhib* by 'Doctor Trumpp Sahib' was patently wrong (*ashuddh*). There was a general demand for correct interpretation. The persistent demand for the *Faridkot wālā Teekā* induced Maharaja Brijinder Singh of Faridkot to order the publication of a second edition which appeared in 1924 in four volumes.<sup>7</sup>

The Singh Sabha Movement provided great impetus for the study of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. Apart from Bhāi Kahn Singh of Nabha whose studies were informed by his understanding of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, Bhāi Vir Singh wrote an elaborate commentary on *Guru Granth Sāhib*

which was published after his death in 1957 in seven volumes as *Santhyā Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*.<sup>8</sup> Already, the *Shabdāarth Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī* had been prepared by Professor Teja Singh by 1941 in consultation with Bawa Harkishan Singh and Professor Nārāin Singh. It was published from Lahore in four volumes.<sup>9</sup> Professor Sahib Singh worked for nearly four decades to complete his commentary on *Guru Granth Sāhib* in 1961 which was published in ten volumes as *Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Darpan*.<sup>10</sup> These three commentaries do not exhaust the list of Sikh exegesis of the *Granth Sāhib* but they do represent Sikh scholarship at its best and, therefore, become indispensable for the study of *Guru Granth Sāhib*.

With the increasing interest of non-Sikhs in the Sikh tradition arose the need for translation of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. The earliest to appear was Gopal Singh's *Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib* (1960-62) in four volumes, followed by Manmohan Singh's *Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib* (1969) in eight volumes. Professor Gurbachan Singh Talib published his *Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib in English Translation* in four volumes in 1984-90. Both Dr. Gopal Singh and Professor Talib have written long introductions to their works to highlight the salient features of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.<sup>11</sup> However, the translation by Manmohan Singh appears to be closer to the text.<sup>12</sup>

In *A Critical Study of the Ādi Granth*, Professor Surindar Singh Kohli discusses the language, metres and imagery of the poetry of the *Ādi Granth*, and the musical measures used for singing its hymns. At the same time, he gives a considerable space to the social and religious conditions depicted in the *Granth*, especially the religious symbols, rituals, and beliefs of Guru Nanak's contemporaries. Two chapters of his book relate to the religious ideology of the *Ādi Granth*.<sup>13</sup> In comparison, Professor Guninder Kaur's *The Guru Granth Sāhib: Its Physics and Metaphysics* is rather

thin. She points out that the relationship between the 'metaphysics' and 'physics' of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* has generally been ignored. She gives an exposition of the 'metaphysics' of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* in terms of the ultimate reality, world, and man. Its 'physics' is discussed in terms of its structure, language, imagery and rhythm.<sup>14</sup>

The history of the compilation of the *Ādi Granth* and the creation of the Sikh 'canon' is the chief concern of Professor Gurinder Singh Mann in *The Making of Sikh Scripture*. He discusses the evolution of the structure of the *Ādi Granth* in terms of the sequencing of *Rāgs* and the internal arrangement within the *Rāg* sections to bring out its structural complexity which distinguishes it from the other religious compilations of the time. He comments on the authority, the role, and future prospects of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.<sup>15</sup>

Professor Pashaura Singh deals with the same subject in *The Guru Granth Sāhib : Canon, Meaning and Authority*. For the 'meaning', he talks of the various traditions (*parṇālīs*), and discusses its role in Sikh worship and Sikh ceremonies, and its function as the Guru. The bulk of his book relates to canon formation. He covers much common ground with G.S. Mann but their understanding is different on a number of important points. Pashaura Singh has devoted a chapter of his *Life and Work of Guru Arjan* to the *Ādi Granth*, in which he pays special attention to the structure of the *Ādi Granth*. The Bhagat Bāṇī is discussed in great detail in his *The Bhagats of the Guru Granth Sāhib : Sikh Self-Definition and the Bhagat Bāṇī*.<sup>16</sup>

The *Guru Granth Sāhib* has now begun to be seen as important for 'interfaith dialogue'. At an international seminar on "Guru Granth Sāhib : Interfaith Understanding to World Peace" held at Guru Nanak Dev University in December 2003, a number of papers related to interfaith dialogue and religious pluralism.<sup>17</sup>

At an international seminar held at the Punjabi

University in February 2004, the *Guru Granth Sāhib* was discussed in terms of its formation, its unique status and its place among the major scriptures of the World. Some of the papers compare the *Guru Granth Sāhib* with the Vedas, the Buddhist Tipitaka, the Tamil Prabandhas, and the *Qur'ān*. Three papers relate to Bhagat Bāṇī, Rāg organization, and the gender discourse. Professor J.P.S. Oberoi in his 'inaugural address' draws attention to 'the theory of the name' as 'the philosophy of Sikhism'. He suggests that the name in Sikhism is not meant merely or chiefly for designation of entities: 'it is a definition of the relation between the part and the whole, the subject and the object of worship, service and self-sacrifice'.<sup>18</sup>

Professor Harjeet Singh Gill in his 'keynote' made preliminary remarks on (a) the sanctity of the divine word, (b) the unique form of the *Ādi Granth* in its formal and conceptual structure, (c) the transformation of a spoken language into an idiom of metaphysical truths, (d) the critique of corruption, falsehood and deception that marked the contemporary social fabric, and (e) the critique of rites and rituals, customs and conventions in contemporary religion. Professor Gill observes that the compositions of Guru Nanak starting with *Arbad narbad dhundhūkārā* and *Gagan mai thāl* present two sides of the same conceptual construct. In one, we are led progressively to the anthropological inequalities and injustices. In the other a blissful vision of the cosmos is juxtaposed with the chaotic state of anthropology. There is dialectical interrelation between the sublimity of the cosmic domain and the harsh realities of earthy life. This conceptual construct does not separate the human from the divine. For understanding the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, it is necessary to explore the equilibrium between anthropology and cosmology.<sup>19</sup>

The scholarly legacy is rich in terms of perspectives, approaches and themes related to the study of the *Granth Sāhib*. To figure prominently in this legacy are the religious,

social and political environment of Guru Nanak, the philosophy and theology of the Gurus, their conception of the goal of life and the means of attaining this goal, the history and structure of the *Ādi Granth* and the significance of the inclusion of the Bhagat Bāṇī, the status of the *Ādi Granth*, and its relevance for interfaith dialogue.

In the present study of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, the starting point is the chapter on the concern of Guru Nanak and his successors with contemporary social order, polity, and religion, reflecting their social awareness. This awareness springs essentially from their conception of God and liberation-in-life, which are taken up in two separate chapters. Most of the theological ideas of the Gurus get related to their conception of God and most of their social concerns get related to their conception of liberation. The conception of God and liberation-in-life result in a new social order, the Sikh Pañth, based on the principle of equality. There is much concern in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* for the new fraternity. Therefore, the emerging *Pañth* is discussed in a separate chapter. In a chapter on the structure of *Guru Granth Sāhib*, special attention is given to the *Rāg* organization, the poetic forms, and the Bhagat Bāṇī. The history and status of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is discussed in a chapter on the Guru eternal, together with its relevance for interfaith dialogue. Finally, the most familiar compositions of the Gurus are introduced in the last chapter which includes selected text with translation in English.

## Notes and References

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2. For example, Guninder Kaur, *The Guru Granth Sāhib : Its Physics and Metaphysics*, New Delhi : Manohar, 1995 (rpt.), pp. 13, 15.

3. Puran Singh, *The Spirit Born People*, Patiala : Punjabi University, 1999 (rpt.), p. 59.
4. *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, Foreword to the first edition, pp. 7, 9.
5. Taran Singh, *Gurbānī Dīān Viākbīā Parnālīān*, Patiala : Punjabi University, 1997.
6. In the Preface to his work, Trumpp states that the Sikh *Granth* was 'incoherent and shallow in the extreme', and it was couched in 'dark and perplexing language' to cover its defects. *The Ādi Granth Or The Holy Scriptures of the Sikhs*, New Delhi : Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers; 1989 (4th edn.), p. vii. Macauliffe's work has been reprinted by D.K. Publishers' Distributors, Delhi, in 3 volumes in 1990 and 1995.
7. *Ādi Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī Steek* (Punjabi), Patiala : Punjab Language Department, 1989 (4th edn.), Introduction.
8. Bhāi Vir Singh (ed.), *Saṁthyā Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, 7 vols, New Delhi : Bhāi Vir Singh Sahit Sadan, 1997 (rpt.), with an appreciative Introduction by Dr. Balbir Singh. Bhāi Vir Singh's work covers only about half of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.
9. *Sbābdārth Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, 4 vols, Amritsar : Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, n.d. The Introduction to the work is also anonymous.
10. Sahib Singh, *Sṛī Guru Granth Sāhib Darpan*, 10 vols, Jalandhar : Raj Publishers, n.d. It is a reprint of the third edition, published in 1972.
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## CHAPTER I

# Social Awareness

Guru Nanak's comment on the contemporary social order, polity and systems of religious beliefs and practices is extraordinarily comprehensive. He talks of the whole society and a number of social practices, and comments on the government and administration and political events. He talks of the Vaishnavas, Shaivas and Shaktas. He talks about the ascetics of various categories, including the Jain monks. He is equally concerned with Islam in both its orthodox and Sūfi forms. It is significant to note that he looked upon contemporary religion in terms of three traditions: the Brahmanical, the ascetical and the Islamic. Each of these three traditions appeared to have some characteristic features which distinguished it from the others. All the three stand bracketed in the *Japujī*, revealing Guru Nanak's basic attitude towards all the three. None of them was authoritative for him. The critique of contemporary religion and Guru Nanak's own message are the two sides of the same spiritual and moral coin. Almost always his criticism is accompanied by his positive message.

### 1. Social Order

Guru Nanak refers to Hindus and Muslims as parts of the social order of his time. The royalty, the nobility, the officials of the government, its intermediaries at lower rungs, and the subject people figure frequently in his compositions. Muslim presence is recognized through the *mullā* and the *qāzī*, the *shaikh* and the *pīr* as much as the *musalmān* in general.

Several professions and occupations are noticed : *sābūkārs*, *sarrāfs*, money-lenders, merchants, traders, shop-keepers, horse-dealers, brokers, cultivators of land, day labourers, goldsmiths, carpenters, dyers, fishermen, sellers of bangles, singers, poets, dancing girls, jugglers, domestic servants and slaves, mendicants and beggars. Then there are thieves, gamblers and addicts. Guru Nanak does not say so explicitly but he refers to the life of luxury of the ruling class and the grinding misery and ignorance of the subject people, the *raī'yat*.

Guru Nanak takes notice of the ideal of the four *varnas* and talks of the Brahman, the Khatri, the Vaishya and the Shudra. There are outcastes like the *chūbrās*, *chandāls* and *dhānaks*. Guru Nanak shows no appreciation for the distinctions of caste, or the high caste (*uttam jāt*). There is no consideration for caste in God's court. The false people have no caste and no honour, nor have they who forget God. None should be proud of caste. Guru Nanak identifies himself with the lowest of the low.

Guru Nanak has much to say about the sacred thread which was a symbol of distinction between the higher and lower castes. He tells the Brahman that the sacred thread he wears, and puts on others, has no spiritual or moral efficacy. The really efficacious and lasting thread is prepared with mercy as the cotton, contentment as the thread, self-control as the knot, and ethical living as the twist. The *pandit* did not have such a *janeū*. The sacred thread he puts on others is bought for four cowries; he whispers in their ears that henceforth the Brahman is their *guru*. At the time of investiture, a goat is slaughtered and cooked; everyone eats it and says that the thread ceremony has been well performed. When the thread is worn out it is thrown away and replaced by another. The adoration of God is the thread that lasts for ever. The honour received in God's court is the sacred thread that never snaps. The sacred thread of the Brahman does not restrain him from scandalous indulgence.

His feet and his hands, his tongue and his eyes are not restrained. He roams around unrestrained.

The sacred thread of the Khatris did not stop them from pandering to the rulers whom they regarded as 'unclean'. Instead of the sword, they wielded the butcher's knife on behalf of the rulers. In their homes the Brahmans blew conches and ate their food. False was the commerce and false the sustenance derived. To become acceptable to the rulers they wore blue dress; they performed worship according to the Puranas but ate the *malechh's* food. Indeed, they ate the meat of goats slaughtered in the Muslim fashion. And yet they sat in the *chaukā* to eat, telling others not to come near so that their food was not polluted. The Brahman's *chaukā* was pointless because the line he drew around did not keep out ignorance, hardness of heart, slander and anger. He practised sinful hypocrisy, with falsehood in his heart.

Guru Nanak had no appreciation for the notion of impurity (*sūtak*) to which the Brahman attached crucial importance. Impurity is everywhere: inside cowdung, in wood, in every grain, and even in water which is the source of life. Impurity enters the kitchen. The only way out is to discard the very notion through proper awareness. The impurity of the mind is avarice; the impurity of the tongue is falsehood; the impurity of eye is to look at women with lust; the impurity of the ear is listening to slander. The whole idea of *sūtak* is an illusion. Birth and death occur through God's will. All things created by God to eat and drink are pure. They who realize this are free from the superstition of *sūtak*. Food, water, fire, salt and ghee are regarded as holy; the Brahman eats them and they turn into offal. What deserves to be denounced is the mouth that does not utter the Name and partakes of food without devotion to the Name. All food is pure except that which is physically, mentally or morally harmful.

The women were regarded impure because of menstruation and giving birth to a child. This was sheer

ignorance. There could be no reproduction without women, and there could be no humanity without reproduction. Human beings are conceived by women; they are born to women; men are betrothed to women and marry them; new generations are born. Men are dependent on women; if one woman dies, man seeks another. Why should they be denounced who give birth even to the *rājān*? In traditional reckoning birth as a king was regarded as noble. Even kings were dependent on women. Only God is independent of women.

Guru Nanak and his successors use the female voice and many of their metaphors and similes are drawn from conjugal life. The wife who is not loved by her husband is unfortunate and miserable : she is *dubāgan*. The one who is loved by her husband is fortunate and happy : she is *subāgan*. The *dubāgan*, who is engrossed in *māyā*, is compared to the wall of saline soil which goes on falling bit by bit. Without the spouse, she wanders helplessly and passes the night in misery. A whole composition by Guru Nanak is on *kuchajjī* or the ill-mannered and unwanted woman. The *subāgan*, on the other hand, is *suchajjī*; she is rewarded for her good deeds and attains union. The *subāgan* is a metaphor for the devotee who meets God through His grace. The woman with merit is fortunate to be loved by her spouse. The songs of happiness are sung in her home. She loves her spouse and he loves her. The best epithet that can be used for a woman is *sadā-subāgan* : she enjoys the love and care of her spouse for all times. She is the symbol of the liberated individual. There is a whole composition of Guru Nanak on *suchajjī* or the woman who is devoted to her spouse and does everything expected of an ideal wife.

The woman who loses her husband is extremely unfortunate. The woman who is absorbed in the true Guru never becomes a widow. The song of joy (*sobilā*) is equally relevant for both wedding and death (which leads to union

with God). The women sing songs on the arrival of the bridegroom. They have every reason to sing the songs of joy when the divine spouse comes home. Marriage, like death, is seen as inevitable. He who does not remember God is like the son of a prostitute who does not know his father. Apart from bracketing men and women explicitly at places, there are references to youth and beauty which surely reflect concern for women. Youth and beauty are a source of *haumai* for women. Without the remembrance of God, the beautiful eyes of a lovely woman and her ravishing adornment of sixteen kinds are a source of humiliation. As much as men, women need and deserve liberation.

Some social practices advocated and mediated by Brahmans in self-interest are not commendable in the eyes of Guru Nanak. One of these is the performance of *shrādh*s. If a burglar steals from a house and uses the booty to offer charity in the name of his ancestors, the dead ancestors become a party to the theft. If the earnings of a *jajmān* are unlawful and he feeds Brahmans for the benefit of his dead ancestors, the Brahman who serves as the 'broker' is equally guilty. Reward can be received only by those who give charity from lawfully earned profits or wages.

The popular practice of floating lamps in water induces Guru Nanak to talk of the lamp of *giān* which cannot be put out by the wind or water and which leads to liberation. Lamps were lighted for the dead as obituary rites. Guru Nanak says that his lamp is the Name, with suffering as the oil. Its light ends all sorrow. God alone is his rice ball (*pinḍ*) and platter (*pattal*); the true Name of God is his refuge in this world and the next. The rice balls offered to gods and to the dead ancestors through Brahmans, are of no use to anyone except those who eat them. In any case, God's grace does not depend on the Brahman's performance.

Guru Nanak takes up the issue of the Vaishnava Brahman's vegetarianism. The debate about its spiritual merit was rather misplaced. Meat was offered to gods in sacrifice.

The Puranas and the Semitic books talk of meat; in all the cosmic ages meat was eaten. They who cover their nose to avoid the smell of meat enjoy human flesh at night. The clever *pandit* forgets that human beings are conceived and born through flesh and they are made of flesh; It was strange that the *jajmān* who ate meat was supposed to go to hell and the *pandit* who received charity from him was supposed to go to heaven. If water is regarded as pure it cannot become impure when it changes form. Vegetarianism was linked with *abinsā* and Guru Nanak did not subscribe to *abinsā*.

Guru Nanak comments on the practice of mourning. Birth and death are ordained by God. He who gives life takes it back. They who mourn the death of a dear one do not remember that they themselves would die. Death provided the occasion to reflect on the purpose of life. Formal mourning served no good purpose. The whole debate about the mode of the disposal of the dead, whether cremation, burial, exposure to animals and birds, throwing the corpse in water or in a dry well, was futile. Guru Nanak's comment on the clay of the Musalmān being used by the potter and burnt in fire can be appreciated in this context. The Muslim claim that all Muslims would be saved and all infidels would be burnt in the fire of hell, irrespective of what they do in life, was refuted by what happens to the Musalmān's clay on the earth itself. It was far more important to think of what one should do in life than what should be done to one's body after death.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad comments on the society of his times. He refers to the *sābūs* with their capital and *vanjārās* who work for them; there is merchandise and profit or loss; there are shops for purchasing goods of all kinds; only they are appreciated who do not waste their capital. There is cultivation and one reaps what one sows. Then there are other occupations and professions. There is the *vaid* who is expected to identify the disease and prescribe the right

medicine. There are female and male wet nurses. There are servants, slaves, and labourers. There are *mantrīs* (who use *mantras* for subduing dangerous creatures like cobras and scorpions). Apart from servants and masters, the most important ties are those of conjugality: there is the *saub* or the *kañt*, and there are *subāgans* and *dubāgans*. The woman is subordinate in the home but the path of liberation is open to her. Apart from the inegalitarian patriarchal family there is the hierarchy of castes, with different duties prescribed for Brahmins, Khatris and Shudras.

Guru Amar Das reiterates that caste does not count in the eyes of God. None should be proud of one's caste. It is the source of all evil. People talk of the four castes but all human beings owe their existence to the same seed. The potter makes vessels of different forms and shapes from the same clay; none can make them bigger or smaller. On gender relations Guru Amar Das talks of the *dubāgan*, the woman who is not enjoyed by her spouse. He talks also of the *subāgan*, the one whom God unites with himself. The woman with merit prepares herself for the marital home while she is in her natal home. She who serves the true Guru and becomes one with him is a *sadā-subāgan*. The sensual *dubāgan* goes to meet another man and she is abandoned by her spouse. Guru Amar Das equates *sūtak* with the inner impurities which stand in the way of true worship, rejecting the notion of pollution.

In the compositions of Guru Ram Das, metaphors and similes come from a large number of occupations. To figure most frequently are trade and agriculture. The *sāhu* provides capital for the *vanjārās* who make profits or suffer losses; they have to render accounts. There are cities and towns with markets and bazaars, traders and shopkeepers, *sarrāfs* and moneylenders, merchandise, and storehouses, sellers and buyers. There are artisans. Villages are founded and there are peasant proprietors, tenant cultivators, and day labourers. *Kirsānī* demands skills and care. There are fields for sowing



and harvesting crops; there are wells to irrigate them. Watchmen protect the crops and guard the heaps of grain. Jaggery and sesame are specifically mentioned as agrarian produce. The gardens bloom. The saline soil is no good for cultivation. Though used in religious and ethical contexts, the similes and metaphors bear witness to close observation.

The other occupations which provide metaphors and similes for Guru Ram Das are those of the potter, the oil-presser, the dyer, the *void*, the fisherman, the gardener, the boatman, the water-diviner, the *sūtardhār*, and the prostitute. The potter's wheel goes round and round to make vessels. The bullock of the oil-presser goes round and round in blindness. The dyer's vat is used for imparting fast colours : the *majīth* and the red *chalūlā* (like the poppy flower) are preferable to the bright but fast-fading *kasumbh*. The *void* identifies the disease and provides medicine. The curse of leprosy and the ailments like fever and migraine are mentioned. The fisherman spreads his net to catch the fish. The gardener looks after plants and flowers that are dear to his master. The boatman takes people across the river, or the sea. The water-diviner discovers underground water for wells. The *sūtardhār* introduces the story to be enacted. The prostitute does not know the father of her child. All these images are used for the religious and ethical message of the Guru.

The social order is inequalitarian. There are rich, propertied persons who enjoy high social status. There are the high caste Brahmans and Khatri, and the low caste Vaishyas and Shudras. Then there are the outcastes like the *chandāls*. There are professional scribes, personal servants, wageless labourers, grooms, thieves, beggars, and slaves. Some of the similies come from the wrestling arena, gambling, and the place of learning. Guru Ram Das refers to the traditional duties of the Khatri, the Vaish and the Shudra but his own duty is appropriation of *nām* which is the source of liberation. Loving devotion is far preferable to

*varnadharma*. Guru Ram Das refers to the natal and marital homes, marriage, dowry and pregnancy. Just as the pregnant woman cares for the conceived child in the hope of giving birth to a son who would grow up to earn wealth, so God takes care of his devotee and protects him.

The metaphors of Guru Arjan come largely from trade and agriculture : the trader (*sāhu*, *vāpārī*, *bāñiā*), the agent (*vanjārā*), the capital (*rās*), the profit (*lāhā*, *khattī*), the merchandise (*saudā*, *vakhkhar*), the shop (*hat*), the duty and tax (*jizya* and *ḍunn*), sowing of the crop, the watchman over the harvest, and the proprietor of land. Two other similes come from forced, unpaid labour (*begār*) and impersonation (*bbekh*, *sāṅg*) of the *bāzīgar*. The references to the four *varnas* occur in connection with the message of Guru Arjan and his predecessors. He who forgets God has no caste or honour. A possibility has been created for the liberation of all : the Khatri, the Brahman, the Sūd, the *Bais* (Vais), and the *chandāl*. The same message of the Name brings liberation to the Khatri, the Brahman, the Sūd and the Vais. The four *varnas* tend to become a metaphor for the social order as a whole. The principle of equality is clearly enunciated. All human beings are made of the same clay (*māṭī*) and have the same light (*jot*). God is the father, we are his children.

This world is the natal home; the marital home is the next world; marriage, therefore, stands for death, carrying the implication that marriage for women is as natural and inevitable as death. The married state is desirable, for the woman does not look good without a spouse. The woman who loves her husband is a real *subāgan*. Virtuous and fortunate is the woman who is dyed in the love of her spouse. To be a *subāgan* is the ideal state for a woman : all sorrows vanish on meeting the spouse. The woman has friends only as long as her husband is with her; she is rolled in dust after his death; no one is bothered about a woman after the death of her husband. The widow's plight is sad.

## 2. Polity and Politics

One of the verses in the *Āsā dī Vār* refers to the human frame and beauty being left behind after death and reward or punishment being received according to one's good or bad deeds; it refers to orders having been given at pleasure; the former potentate has now to tread the narrow path; he stands exposed and looks frightening as he goes to hell; one has to regret one's evil deeds in the end. The language used in this stanza suggests that the potentate was a ruler and a Muslim. In another stanza, reference to the Muslim ruler is explicit when he is called *sultān*. Disgraced by God he becomes lighter than the blade of grass and receives no charity when he begs from door to door. They who had caparisoned horses running fast like the wind, who had colourful *barams*, who were proud of their splendid palaces and tall mansions, and who did whatever they liked, are seen as having wasted their lives without knowing God; issuing commands to others they had forgotten death. Old age has overtaken them. Presumably they would face judgement not only for what they did as individuals but also as rulers.

There is explicit reference to Turko-Afghan rule (*turk-paṭhānī aml*). It is seen as a characteristic of the Kaliyuga; the name of God now is Allah and the favourite colour for dress is blue. An assessment is built into this close association of Turko-Afghan rule with the worst of the cosmic ages. In the Kaliyuga has occurred the famine of truth and falsehood has spread all around; human beings have turned into goblins. The seed is crushed, and it cannot sprout. Greed, evil, and lust are dominant like the *rāja*, *mehtā* and *sikdār* (*shiqqdār*). The fire of passion is the chariot and falsehood the charioteer in the Kaliyuga. The assessment is not always implicit. It is explicitly stated that 'they who perform *namāz* can yet eat human beings'. This can be seen as a reference to oppression under the Turko-Afghan rule.

Guru Nanak's comment covers the rulers as *sultāns*,

*bādashāhs* and *rājas*; it covers the ruling class as *nāibs*, *khāns*, *maliks*, the *umarā*, and the *shiqqdārs*. The intermediaries between them and the subject people (*raī'yat*) are referred to as *mehtās* and *muqaddams*. Like the ordinary people, the rulers and the other representatives of the state die in the end, leaving all their possessions behind. They remain entangled in death and rebirth. The armies and palaces provide no support without the true Name. The horses and elephants, and spears and trumpets are false without the remembrance of the Lord, and there is no liberation without the Guru's *shabad* even for *rājas*, *khāns* and *maliks*. Millions may stand up to salute the masters of vast armies, and millions may obey them, but all this is futile without honour in God's court. Even more than the ordinary people, the rulers suffer from the disease of *haumai*. Unlike the ordinary people, the rulers collect wealth (on the basis of their power), and their thirst for power is never quenched. If anything, the rulers and the state functionaries are more disadvantaged than the ordinary people for the pursuit of ethical and spiritual life.

Indeed, the rulers are butchers; they suck human blood. The *rājas* act like lions and the *muqaddams* act like dogs; they fall upon the people at will; the lions inflict wounds and the blood is licked by the dogs. Justice is administered not in the name of God (as a primary duty of the rulers) but only when the palm is greased. There is discrimination on the basis of faith. Now that the turn of the *shaikhs* has come, *Ādi Purkh* is called Allah; it has become customary to tax gods and their temples.

The verses known as *Bābur-bāñī* contain among other things a political comment. The army of Babur is called the marriage party of sin; brides are demanded by force; the rites of marriage are performed by Satan and not by the *qāzi* or the Brahman. The reference clearly is to rape. No distinction was made between women of low and high caste, or between Muslim and Hindu women. Khurasan (Kabul) was

occupied in a friendly manner but Hindustan was threatened; the Mughals descended as the agency of Death; the people cried in suffering. God is the creator of all human beings. If the mighty strike the mighty, the fight is equal. But if a lion falls upon a herd of cattle, the master is accountable. The unarmed, civilian, people were killed, and the rulers of the land did not protect them. Thus, both Babur and the Afghan rulers are blamed. The Afghans suffered for their political failure. Gone are the sports and stables of the erstwhile rulers, gone are their sword-belts and red tunics; gone are their palaces and tall mansions, and the *harams* in which beautiful women banished their sleep. Wealth cannot be amassed without sins and it leads to misery. God takes away the goodness from those whom he wishes to mislead. Their tall mansions have been razed and even the princes have been cut into pieces. The women of the ruling classes lived a life of luxury and indulgence, oblivious of God. They suffered with their men. They were dishonoured. Had they thought beforehand they would not have suffered. There is a moral dimension to the political situation in which men and women suffer because of their misdeeds in accordance with God's *hukam*.

With all their power, pride and pelf, the rulers were subject to the power of God, the only true ruler. His service is far preferable to service of the earthly rulers. That is why *nām* is Guru Nanak's power, his *diwān*, his army and his *sultān*. He who has direct access to the divine court does not have to bow to anyone else. By turning to God, the colourless cloth could be dyed and the split seed could become whole to sprout again.

For Guru Angad, the state is represented by *pātsbhāhs*, *sālārs*, *mīrs* and *maliks*, *foṭādārs* and *chaudharīs*; orders are issued and executed. There are the archers, with their bows and arrows. Power is exercised in accordance with the divine ordinance; they have no power of their own. The only power in the universe is that of God.

For Guru Amar Das too, God is the true king. His rule is eternal. In all the four Yugas there is only one ruler (*pātshāh*) and only one command (*amr*). God is the King of kings. There is no one above Him. There is only One who heads the government of the universe and He alone issues orders. Compared with the True King, the rulers of the world pale into insignificance. Do not call them *Rājas* who fight and die on the field of battle; they assume birth again and again (like ordinary men). God has spread the true umbrella over the heads of *bhagats* who enjoy real rulership (*pātshāhī*). He who turns to the Guru, finds the rulership of the world. The real *pātshāhs* are they who are dyed in the Name; all other *pātshāhs* are false.

In the compositions of Guru Ram Das figure kings and emperors, *dīwāns*, *khāns*, *maliks*, and *umarā*. Apart from Bhūpats and Rājas there are Rāos and Rāṇās. There are local administrators (*shiqqdārs* and *chaudharis*) and there are collectors of tax (*jāgāti*). Courts are held and orders are issued. Justice is sought and punishment inflicted. There are forts, palaces, gates, and pillars. There are mints for striking coins. There are the subject people. Over and above them all is the power of God. Even the rulers are accountable to Him.

Guru Arjan refers to the hierarchy of power from the *pañchas* to the Rāja, through the *shiqqdārs*, and the *umarā*. The real power belongs to God. He is the True Master (*Sachchā Sāhib*); true is His throne, and true His treasury; His rule is true. The Lord of the universe is the master of *Khāns* and *Sultāns*. He alone has the umbrella of sovereignty over his head, and none else. He is the King of kings. The prince and the pauper are the same in His eyes. He can degrade the *Sultāns* and *Khāns* in a moment and exalt the lowly to lordship. He can turn rulers into worms and raise a worm to power. Horses and elephants are symbols of power with which are associated the means of luxury and indulgence. Without piety, however, rulership, riches, power,

pelf, and authority are of no avail. Armies, deputies and courtiers are the source of *haumai*, vast territory and enjoyment of innumerable women are no more real than a dream. There is no real satisfaction in being a *Malik* or a *Khān*.

Earthly things are left behind : rulership, riches horses and elephants, youth, fame, beauty and wealth. In comparison with the eternal ruler, Rāṇās and Rāos are mere beggars. Far preferable to their service (*chākārī*) and office of status (*potdārī*) is God's service and honour in God's court. The True Guru is the true king, the King of kings. To sit in his presence is better than to stand in the presence of emperors.

### 3. The Brahmanical Tradition

Guru Nanak's comprehensive comment on the Brahmanical tradition includes scriptures, gods and goddesses, worship of idols, ritual charities, pilgrimage, *hom*, *ārati*, and dance and drama related to the human incarnations of Vishnu. As representatives of the Brahmanical tradition, 'Hindus' praise God as laid down in the Shastras; they bathe at sacred places and worship idols in temples, burning incense. The Brahmins were associated with learning. For Guru Nanak, however, cartloads and boatfuls of books do not help. One may read books all the year round, all the months of a year and with each breath but without any spiritual gain. What matters, essentially, is dedication to God and faith in Him. The foolish *pandit* flaunts his learning and skill in argument but his real purpose is to garner wealth.

There is a whole *shalok* on the Brahmin. He reads books, performs worship, and engages in contention. He worships stones and adopts the posture of meditation, like the heron. He tells lies in a palatable manner. He recites the *Gāyatrī* three times a day. He wears a necklace of beads around his neck and puts a paste mark on his forehead. He

keeps two *dhotīs* and a cloth to cover his head. If his idea is to please God, his acts are surely futile. The only way to please God is to meditate on Him with complete sincerity.

Elsewhere in the *bānī* of Guru Nanak there is much about the beliefs and practices of the Brahman. The Master who created air, water and fire also created Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. He alone is the giver of gifts; all others are beggars. There are thirty-three crores of gods who beg from the supreme Lord. Nothing can be contained in an inverted bowl; nectar falls into the bowl held upright. In other words, nothing comes out of worshipping God's creatures, the so-called gods, including Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh. Indeed, like the rest of the world, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra suffer from the disease (of mortality). They are not eternal.

The Vedas are said to inculcate belief in the One whose limits cannot be known, the only creator of the universe who has established the earth and the sky without any visible support. The Vedas are believed to talk of *bhagī* which shows the light. The Shastras and Smritis are said to talk of the Name which leads to peace through the Guru's instruction. However, the recitation of the Veda leads merely to pride and contention, becoming a chain (that keeps one bound to death and rebirth). Millions of lessons in the Shastras and millions of recitations of the Puranas are of no use if one does not find honour (in God's court). Such an honour comes from the Name through God's grace. Guru Nanak asks the *pandit* if he could show the way to God. The question carries the implication that the *pandit* does not know. Indeed, fools are called *pandits*. They merely talk and never reflect. A real *pandit* is he who acquires *giān*; who can see the One in all human beings and is free from *haumai*. Some recite the Veda and some the Puranas; some count beads; Guru Nanak recognizes only the Name.

Guru Nanak does not appreciate the practices followed or recommended by the Brahman. *Hom*, *jagg* and reading of the Puranas can have value only if they are acceptable



(to God). Liberation comes through the Name by turning to the Guru and not through *jagg*, *hom*, *pun*, *tap* or *pūjā*. If the whole body is cut into pieces and offered to the fire like *ghee*, if the mind and the body are offered like firewood, and even if the act is repeated a million times, it cannot equal the merit of appropriating the Name. The gods and goddesses of stone are washed and worshipped but if they are left in water they sink. What can they do for the worshipper?

If the idol itself has no relevance for genuine worship of God, an *āratī* offered to the idol can have no meaning. No *āratī* can be appropriate for the bestower of liberation. The sky is the platter, the sun and the moon are the lamps, the stars are the pearls, the fragrant air is the *chaur*, the entire vegetation serves as flowers for offering and the unstruck music is the drum played for Him. The whole creation is a form of *āratī* for Him.

Bathing at sacred places is of no use when the mind is filled with the dirt of pride. The object of pilgrimage is within oneself. The merit attributed to pilgrimage at all the sixty-eight sacred places is at the Guru's feet. The real pilgrimage is the Guru's sight and the company of *sants*. If you are keen on pilgrimage, the real *tīrath* is the Name and the *shabad*. The *giān* given by the Guru is the real place of pilgrimage with the merit attributed to bathing on ten auspicious occasions. There is no *tīrath* like the Guru.

The *pandit* reads books but does not understand; he teaches others as a gainful occupation; his talk is false and his actions show no awareness of the *shabad*. There are many *pandits* who practise astrology and talk of the Veda; they remain subject to death and rebirth. Without the Guru's grace, they can never attain liberation. A real Brahman is he who knows Brahm; he remains immersed in loving devotion and realizes that God is in every human being. Greatness comes from the Name and from recognizing the Guru's *shabad*. He exercises restraint and regards contentment as

his *dharm*; he breaks the chain of death and rebirth to attain liberation; such a Brahman is entitled to worship. In the *Slok Sabskriti*, Guru Nanak describes the multifarious activities of the Brahman to tell him that he cannot find the right path without the true Guru. Liberation comes through the Guru's grace. There is only one God, and no gods or goddesses to be worshipped. There is only one *shabad* for all, and not different *dharmas* for Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras.

Contrary to the popular impression, Guru Nanak is very critical of the Vaishnava worship of Rama and Krishna. In the first place, there was no room for incarnation in Guru Nanak's conception of God. Rama of history is referred to as the dust of God's feet. It brings no credit to Krishna that he forcibly seduced Chandraval and stole the wish-fulfilling tree (*pārjāt*) for a *gopī*, and engaged in dalliance with her in Bindraban. There were numerous legends of Krishna. Many danced to tunes and whirled about, performed the role of kings and queens in public places, wearing earrings and necklaces worth *lakhs* of rupees. Idle chatter and clever devices do not lead to enlightenment. It is received only through God's grace.

The whole universe is dancing in praise of God. The *gbarīs* are Krishna's milkmaids, and *pabars* are Krishna and his cowherds. The earth with its wealth and riches becomes a snare for human beings who remain subject to death and rebirth. "The disciples play on musical instruments and the *gurus* dance; they move their feet and their heads; dust flies and falls into their hair; the people feel amused and go home (after the performance). The performers keep to the measure for bread, striking their feet on the ground; they sing as *gopīs* and as *kāhn*; they sing as Sita and Rāja Ram. This is no worship. The whole universe is the creation of the Fearless and the Formless One who alone is True. His worship alone leads to liberation.

Dancing and jumping are a passing pleasure. All bound

in the bonds of deeds are whirling around, enacting a kind of dance. Endless is their enumeration : the oil-press, the spinning wheel, the grind stone, the potter's wheel, the whirlwind, the top, the churning wheel, the bullocks yoked to the crusher to separate grain from the chaff, the winged creatures ceaselessly whirling, and the living beings whirling on the pike. In the same way, the learned dance, play on instruments and deck themselves for histrionic postures, shouting aloud and singing tales of the past heroes, their fights and contests. There is no merit in all this.

Guru Nanak tells the Vaishnavas that they should dance with understanding as the musical instrument (*wāṇā*) and loving devotion as the drum (*pakhāwaj*); the mind absorbed in this dance is the source of happiness; austerities are subsumed in this *bhagti*; this is the way to dance. The praise of God is the real dance; all else is sensual pleasure. The Vaishnava dance is associated with the supposed incarnations of Vishnu as Rama or Krishna. The creator of the universe does not become great by killing Ravana. He who is all pervasive, who created all living beings, and who runs the universe does not become great by subduing the serpent Kali, or killing Kansa. The One who is manifest everywhere cannot be confined to a time or a place. The real dance is to go to the *sarigat* of the Sikhs and to hear the true Name.

The volume of Guru Angad's *bānī* is very thin. Even so he refers to the Brahmanical tradition. The Vedas dwell on sinful and virtuous actions which lead to hell or heaven. They talk of high and low castes and of different kinds. The world wanders in illusion. The *pandit* does not know God.

Guru Amar Das mentions the learned *pandit* explicitly as a *manmukh*. He is associated with *sūtak*. The *manmukh pandit* follows the wrong path (*kumārg*). He reads much and debates much, and without the Guru spreads illusion; without the *shabad* he cannot attain liberation; he remains chained to the wheel 84,00,000 of births. The *pandit* reads

the Vedas and gives elaborate expositions but he remains entangled in *māyā*. He remains oblivious of the divine Name and receives punishment. He recites loudly and does not search for the Brahm within; he teaches others but he himself does not understand. He wastes his life and is reborn again and again. He expounds the Vedas, Shastras and Smritis but he remains in illusion and does not grasp the essence. Without serving the True Guru he gains no peace and multiplies suffering. Because of what he says and does, the *pandit* cannot attain the 'fourth stage' (which is beyond the three qualities). His ignorance keeps him in the dark all the time. The Vedas talk loudly of the three qualities of *māyā*. He who remains attached to *māyā* cannot have understanding. God is both *nirgun* and *sargun* : the *pandit* does not grasp this essence. He who becomes *Brahmgiānī* is the real Brahman. The learned *pandit* remains alien to his own 'self'. The alternative to the *pandit's* learning is reflection on the Guru's *shabad*. The four Vedas were given to Brahma and he reflected on them. But poor Brahma could not understand the divine order (*hukam*) and remained occupied with hell and heaven, and incarnations. The *pandit* sets himself up as the teacher (*pādhā*) without having the qualifications of a teacher. Entangled in *māyā*, he keeps others entangled. The daughter of his *jajmān* is like his own daughter, but he receives remuneration for performing her marriage ceremony. The learning of the *pandit* does not lead to contentment. The reading of the Vedas does not remove the dirt. His pride is the result of his entanglement in *māyā*. The study of the Vedas does not lead to understanding of the Name. The Vedas dwell merely on good and evil deeds. The Shastras and Smritis do not lead to the goal of life. The *pandit* is advised to appropriate the way meant for the followers of the Gurus. An obvious implication of the invitation to the *pandit* to adopt the Sikh way of life is the futility of his own practices. All *karm-kāñḍ* is mere entanglement in *māyā*. He

who entertains the notion of impurity (*sūtak*) can never perform a commendable deed or right worship. Pride (*abarīkār*) is not eradicated by bathing at *tīraths*. Right thinking does not come by going to Kasi, nor does one get rid of one's wrong thinking. The Kasi is in the mind. All the sixty-eight *tīraths* accompany him who has lodged God in his heart. Only that *sandhyā* is acceptable which leads to the remembrance of God. Without realizing God, *sandhyā*, *tarpan* and *gāyatrī* lead to nothing but suffering. Drawn by consciousness of the divine is the true *chaukā*; the divine Name is the true food as the basis of human life. Were I to become a *pāṇḍit-jotkī* and read all the four Vedas, were I to be known in all the nine regions of the earth for my conduct and intelligence, were my *chaukā* never made impure, (it would be a great misfortune); if I were to forget the true word; all *chaukā*s are false, the only true entity is God. Guru Amar Das advises the *pāṇḍā* to replace the fasts of Naumī, Dasamī, Ekādasi and Duādasi by appropriation of the truth to control his senses and to find the way to liberation.

However, the *pandit*, the *pādhā* and the *pāṇḍā* are not the only ones to be invited to the new path. The worshippers of Krishna are told to recognize God (*Bhagwant*) and their own self through the Guru's grace; they should control their mind and concentrate on the One; they should die in life; they should meditate on the Name so that they may attain liberation. There is no bhakti in dancing and jumping; only he attains bhakti who dies through the *shabad*. There is a whole composition on dance in *Rāg Gūjri*. One should 'dance' for the Guru, and in accordance with the Guru's will, to get rid of the fear of Death. He who turns to the Guru becomes absorbed in the *shabad* and 'dances' through God's grace and is enabled by God to live in accordance with His *bukam*. The true *bhagats* are the real *giānīs*. They 'dance' to God's will.

The religious life reflected in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das relates largely to Brahmanical dispensation : *tīrath*, *barat*, *jagg*, *pun*, and *pūjā*. Apart from the four Vedas, eighteen Puranas, six darshans, Smritis and Shastras, there are references to *jap*, *tap* and *sanjam*, thirty-three crores of gods, sixty-eight places of pilgrimage, and the most sacred rivers. Brahma, Vishnu and Mahadev appear as God's creatures. There is nothing commendable in the beliefs and practices of the Brahman.

The Vaishnavas take long to bring bells and cymbals and to tune the rebeck. Far better it is to use this time in contemplation of the Name. They take long to collect notes and to tune melody of the measure. Far better it is to use this time for laudation of the Lord. They take long to stretch hands to form poses. Far better it is to use this time to contemplate the Divine Name. They should sing the praises of God in the true association of God's devotees. Thereby illumination would come and darkness would be lifted. The devotees of God should 'dance the dance of contemplation'. The Sikh way is far preferable to that of the Vaishnava *bhaktas*.

Guru Arjan refers to the Brahmanical system of religious beliefs and practices in which Brahman or the *pandit*, his spotless *dhoti*, the sacred thread and the sacred mark, performance of *hom*, the six essential duties, rites and ceremonies, pilgrimage, fasting, recitation of the Vedas, and reading of Shastras, Puranas and Smritis figure in a number of verses. The Vedas sing God's praises but only inadequately. Brahma, Indra, Vishnu, and his incarnations, are God's creation. Brahma did not know the secret of God and *avtārs* did not know His limits. One could not attain God through the Vedas as one could not do so through pilgrimage, wandering all over and doling out charities. None of the six schools of philosophy leads to the right path. The Brahman gives instruction without knowing the truth.

#### 4. The Ascetical Tradition

Contrary to the general impression, Guru Nanak has little appreciation for the *jogīs*, and none for the ascetics in general. In the *Japu*, Guru Nanak tells the *jogī* to have the earrings of contentment, the begging bowl of productive work, the ashes of meditation on God, the cloak of the fear of death, the staff of trust, and the skill of keeping his body free from evil. To regard all human beings as equal is to belong to the highest order of the *jogīs*; to conquer the self is to conquer the world. The *jogī* should hail the Eternal Lord who has been there from the very beginning, who is without blemish, who is indestructible, and who remains the same throughout the cosmic ages. The *jogī* should make *giān* his food and mercy the female-in-charge of the kitchen; instead of blowing the horn he should hear the unstruck music (*nād*) within himself; he should dedicate himself to the Master of all human beings instead of seeking supranatural powers; God alone determines union or separation and one receives what He ordains.

The *jogīs* meditate on the void and refer to God as invisible (*alakh*); He has a subtle form; He is not affected by *māyā*; the whole universe is His visible body. Then there are other ascetics in various garbs who inflict physical pain on themselves. Some go without eating, others go without any clothes. There are some who observe silence, and others who go barefoot. There are some who eat dirty food and put ashes in their hair. They are blind and they lose all honour. Without the Name, none can find a place of honour. Some live in the wilderness or in cremation grounds. They all regret in the end. What is common to them all are ascetical practices and renunciation, carrying the implication of mendicancy. Guru Nanak was opposed to all these.

Guru Nanak uses metaphors from the ideas and practices of the *jogīs*, reflecting his thorough familiarity with their system and also his anxiety to underscore its

inadequacies. By smearing ashes on one's naked body, pride does not vanish; this is not the way to jog; why forget the name of God, which alone is helpful in the end? Why not remember him who is the giver of the body and the life within it; jog is not to be found in *marbīs* and *masāns*. Guru Nanak has no appreciation for the aspiration to acquire supranatural powers. God bestows gifts in accordance with His greatness; when He is kind He bestows the gift of the Name, the greatest of all gifts. Compared with this gift no power is of any value : neither the power to create fire out of ice, to eat iron for food, to drink all suffering like water, to ride the earth as a mount, to weigh the skies in a balance, nor to become so large as to be contained nowhere, to have power over everyone, nor to do whatever one likes and make others do what one likes.

Guru Nanak tells the *jogīs* that jog does not consist in donning the cloak, holding the staff, or smearing the body with ashes. It does not consist in wearing the earrings, shaving the head, or blowing the horn (*singī*). The secret of jog lies in remaining detached-in-attachment. Jog does not consist in mere talk; only he can be called a real *jogī* who regards all human beings as equal. Jog does not consist in living outside (habitations) in *marbīs* and *masāns*; it does not consist in deep meditation. Jog does not consist in wandering in different countries in all the ten directions; it does not consist in bathing at sacred places. Jog is attained by remaining detached-in-attachment. All illusions vanish on meeting the true Guru and the mind is stilled. The ambrosia begins to drop down, the unstruck music is heard, and God is recognized within oneself. Jog is attained thus by remaining detached-in-attachment. Jog should be pursued in such a way that one becomes dead-in-life. The state of fearlessness is attained when the *singī* produces music unblown.

Guru Nanak tells Machhandar to control the five senses as the right way to jog; he should try to liberate others as



well as himself. The one who does this remains absorbed in God all the time. He should beg for loving devotion in fear. His thirst would be quenched and contentment would well up. He should meditate on God to become one with Him. He should meditate deeply on the true Name. The real *avadhūt* remains hopeless-in-hope, and recognizes God. The union of God and human being is the secret revealed by Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak talks of bhakti-jog as the real jog. The earrings are internal to the body which itself is the cloak; the mind is the staff to control the five senses; this is the way to jog. There is one Word and no other; dedication to it is the food of roots and fruits. If by shaving the head one finds God, there are many who do this on the banks of the Ganges. The blind do not turn to the only master of the three worlds. The fear (of death) is not removed by sham talk. Take refuge in the One, forsaking greed. The *jogī* should remember the Pure One and not indulge in false talk. They who adopt forgiveness, and whose fast is contentment, they get rid of the disease and do not suffer death. They attain liberation and are assimilated to the formless one. The real *jogī* has no fear. The fearless *jogī* invokes the Pure One; keeps awake to meditate on truth; that is the kind of *jogī* who is appreciated. He burns the fear of death in the fire of *giān*; he gets rid of pride on the path of death; he attains liberation for himself and his forebears. He who serves the true Guru is the real *jogī*. Immersed in fear he becomes fearless; he is assimilated to the One he serves.

In a number of verses Guru Nanak uses the terminology of the *jogīs* to convey his own message and to express his own values. The *shabad* is the real *jogī*'s horn and through it he hears the unstruck divine music. The Guru's *shabad* is the *mundrā* in his heart; forgiveness is his cloak; he accepts what God does as the best for him; he finds the treasure of *sahaj-jog*. He who is linked with God is the real *jogī*; the name of the Pure One is his nectar and he tastes

the juice of *giān*. Meditating on God, he discards all contention; the *shabad* is his *siṅgī* to hear sweet music day and night. Reflection is his bowl and *giān* his staff; awareness of God's presence is his *bibhūt*. Guru Nanak is quite explicit : 'The praise of God is our established practice and our *pañth* is *Gurmukh pañth*'. The same light in innumerable forms is our *samya*. Guru Nanak tells Bharthari *jogī* that the object of his devotion is the One. Guru Nanak offers to the *jogīs* the praises of God, meditation on Him, the *shabad* of the true Guru, his *bāṇī*, service, acceptance of God's will, and his Name. Treating all human beings with equal consideration is the state of *sabaj*; the *shabad* constitutes the alms for a real *jogī*.

Asceticism, renunciation, and mendicancy were some of the characteristics of the *jogīs*, but these were not confined to them. There were other categories of renunciants who practised austerities, generally known as *sanyāsīs* and *bairāgīs*. Guru Nanak makes a similar comment on them. The fire is not quenched by wandering in all the ten directions; the inner dirt is not removed by roaming in various garbs. The instruction of true Guru leads to *bhagti*; the thirst due to *haumai* is quenched by what the Guru says. Austerities in a cave in a mountain of gold or in deep waters, and hanging upside down between the earth and the sky is *durmat*, like covering the entire body with dresses of all kinds or remaining deliberately dirty (like the Jain monks). He with whom God is pleased is the real *bairāgī*. With the awe of God and love of the *shabad* in his heart he serves the Guru. There can be no *bairāg* in dual affiliation (*dubidhā*). A *siddh*, a *sādhik*, a *jogī* or a *jaṅgam* is he who invokes the One. He recites the Lord's name and does not care for *jap*, *tap*, *saṅjam* or *karm*. Through the Guru and the *shabad* he attains liberation. He who begs for food and clothes remains hungry here and suffers sorrow hereafter. Without *gurmat*, he loses honour. The way of *bhagti* is found through the Guru's instruction.

The Jain monks are criticized most severely. The pluckheads drink dirty water and eat the leftover food. They spread out their offal and smell its bad odour. They are shy of water. They pluck their hair with their fingers smeared with ashes. They abandon their occupation, and their family weeps for them. They sit together as if in mourning. With cups tied to their waist and threads on their wrists, they move in a single file. They are neither *jogīs* nor *jaṅgams*, neither *qāzīs* nor *mullās*; they are cursed by God, the whole lot of them. They do not realize that God alone gives life and takes it away. They are strangers to *dān* and *isnān*. Water is the source of all food and life. The Guru is the ocean and his Sikhs the streams (for anyone to bathe in their association). If the pluckheads do not bathe, let there be seven handfuls of dust over their heads. To the asceticism, renunciation, and mendicancy of the Jain monks is added their uncleanness and atheism. The gulf between the Jain monks and Guru Nanak was thus the widest.

Guru Angad looks upon the scope of Yoga as narrow. Guru Amar Das refer to *jogīs*, *sanyāsīs*, *siddhs*, *sādhiks*, and *maun-dhārīs*. The *jogīs*, *jaṅgams* and *sanyāsīs* suffer from pride; their demand for alms is not confined to food and dress; they waste their lives in proud obstinacy (*baṭh*). Only he meditates truly who meditates on the Name by turning to the Guru. He who receives the Name by turning to the Guru is the real *jogī* and knows the real technique; one does not become a *jogī* by adopting the garb of a *jogī*. One may learn all the postures of the *siddhs* and control one's senses but the dirt of the mind is not removed so long as one does not get rid of *haumai*. The *jogīs*, *jaṅgams* and *sanyāsīs* remain alien to the truth without the Guru. The *jogī*, the *pandit* and the *bhekh-dhārī* stand bracketed as engrossed in *māyā*.

Guru Ram Das prays to God that the heart of all may bend to divine devotion. The *jogī* strums the gut but his harp sounds hollow. His heart can be drenched in joy only by

the Guru's instruction. The songs that the *jogī* sings and his manifold utterances are only play of the mind : the bullocks he yokes to the wheel to irrigate the field eat away the tender shoots. Guru Arjan refers to *jogīs*, *sanyāsīs*, *tapsīs*, *monīs*, *udāsīs*, *avadhūts* and *jatīs* as ascetics. The *jogī's* *khiñthā* is a mark of his identity. His matted hair and wanderings and the ascetical postures of the *jogīs* and *siddhs* are also mentioned. Common to them all is renunciation which is opposed to the Sikh ideal of detached attitude amidst social commitment.

## 5. The Islamic Tradition

In the *Āsā dī Vār*, there is comment on Islamic beliefs and practices. The Semitic scriptures are referred to as *kateb*. The Musalmāns praise the *sharī'at* above all else; they study it and reflect on it. They believe that the servant of God accepts the bonds of the *sharī'at* to have a sight of God in Paradise. In their belief, the non-believers were destined to suffer the torments of hell, but only God knows what will happen to human beings after death. The Muslim claim to an exclusive possession of the truth has no justification.

Guru Nanak refers to the various categories of religious persons among Muslims. Apart from the prophets, there are *pīrs* and *shaikhs*, *qāzīs* and *mullās*, *sālīks*, *sādiqs* and *shahīds*, and there are *darveshes* at God's door. For abundance of His blessings, they recite special prayers. However, God does not consult anyone when he creates or destroys, when he gives or takes away. His power is known only to Him and He does what He likes. He watches everyone and bestows His grace on anyone He likes. His *bukam* cannot be measured, and none can describe it. Even a hundred poets coming together cannot describe a small part (of His power); they can only cry in despair. Allah is unfathomable and limitless, the true patron whose name is pure and whose abode is pure. The implication is that

Muslims may claim to know Allah and His true worship, but Allah even of their scripture is inscrutable and His will cannot be anticipated.

Guru Nanak advises Musalmāns to recite the name of Khuda with inner faith and not for the sake of appearance. This advice is preceded by the statement that a cloth soiled by blood is regarded as impure (*palit*); how can the heart of a person who drinks human blood be pure (*nirmal*)? He who regards mercy as the mosque, sincerity of faith as the prayer mat, honest earning as the *Qur'ān*, modesty as the circumcision, and good will as the fast is a real Musalmān. Good conduct is his pilgrimage, truth his *pīr*, and compassion his *kalmā* and *namāz*. 'What pleases God' is his rosary. Such a Musalmān receives honour from God.

The importance of honest living and action is emphasized in similar terms. What belongs to others should be regarded as pork by a Musalmān. Even the *pīr* would intercede only on behalf of that Musalmān who does not eat dishonestly earned food. Not by mere profession but by true actions can he go to heaven. Unlawful food does not become lawful if spice is added to it. Falsehood begets only falsehood. The first of the five daily prayers should be 'truth', the second 'what is lawful', and the third 'good will for all'; 'right intention' should be the fourth prayer, and the fifth should be 'the praises of God'. Only he can be called Musalmān whose *kalmā* is 'good conduct'.

In one verse there is a suggestion that Guru Nanak appreciates the ways of the Sūfis more than those of the '*ulamā*'. It is not easy to be a Musalmān; one should be called so if one is a real Musalmān. First of all he should adopt the path of the *aulīyā* and remove all impurities to clear the mirror of his heart. He should submit to the guide so as to obliterate the difference between life and death. He should accept the will of God and lose all sense of self. He should be compassionate towards all human beings. Only then can

he be called a Musalmān. Some of the basic values of the Sūfis are brought into focus here.

However, Guru Nanak's appreciation for the Sūfis was not unqualified. There were certain practices of the Sūfis which he did not appreciate. One of these was their general acceptance of patronage from the state in the form of revenue-free lands. Guru Nanak says that the Name is his summer harvest; his winter harvest is the true Name; he has received this grant (*mahdūd*) from the door of the Lord. There are numerous doors in the world and there are innumerable beggars who beg thereat. The *shaikhs* do not beg at God's door. They look to the state for patronage. This statement is preceded by a strong denunciation of the practice of the Sūfi *shaikhs* to bestow caps (*kulha*) upon their disciples by way of authorization to guide others. This, in Guru Nanak's eyes, is presumptuous. Only God knows whether or not one is acceptable in his court. The *shaikh* presumes that he is; furthermore, he thinks that he can enable others to find the goal who can guide still others. The *shaikh* is compared to a rat which is too fat to enter the hole and yet attaches a winnowing basket to its tail. All those who give and receive such blessings lose honour.

In his comments on contemporary Islam, Guru Nanak defines *maulā* (an epithet for Allah) as the master who created the world with all that flourishes in it. The *mullā* should be afraid of his power. The *mullā* and the *qāzī* should recognize God; their learning would not save them from death. The real *qāzī* discards 'self' and makes the Name his sole refuge. The true creator is there now and shall be there when all else has perished. The learned Musalmān performs five daily prayers and reads the *Qur'ān* and other books; when the call comes from the grave all is left behind. The practices of the *'ulamā* do not earn any merit for the life hereafter.

The representatives of all the three traditions follow the path of ruin. The Brahman bathes and kills living beings; only

he is a real Brahman who meditates on God, liberates himself and leads others to liberation. The *jogī* is blind to the real skill; only he is a real *jogī* who realizes that he needs the Guru's grace to recognize the One. The *qāzī* speaks falsehood and eats dirt; only he is a real *qāzī* who turns his back (on *māyā*) and through the Guru's grace becomes dead while alive. Implicit in this critique is the invitation to the Brahman, the *jogī* and the *qāzī* to follow the path adopted by Guru Nanak.

Guru Nanak was familiar with the tradition of *guru* and *chelā* in all the three traditions. He has a telling comment to make on this tradition : The disciples whose *guru* is blind can find no place. Without the true Guru one cannot find *nām* and without *nām* one cannot have the taste (of liberation). The *sādhs* and *sants* whom Guru Nanak appreciates have to be carefully identified.

Guru Amar Das states that real *darveshes* are rare. To beg from door to door is a blot on the garb of a *darvesh*, and his life is a curse. To discard hope and fear by turning to the Guru is the means to receive the alms of the Name. Guru Amar Das addresses the *shaikh* and asks him to discard the pride of power and to entertain the fear of God. He should pierce his hard heart with the (arrow of the) *shabad* so that peace is lodged in his heart. He should act with peace in his mind to find a place with the Master. The *shaikh* wanders in all the four directions; he should concentrate his mind on the One. He should forget 'here and there' and recognize the *shabad* of the Guru; prostrate before the True Guru who is the knower of everything; burn all hope and fear and live like a guest in this world. He should walk in accordance with the True Guru's will so that he may receive honour in the divine court. Not to remember the Name is to remain accursed in what one wears and what one eats. Evidently, Guru Amar Das invites the representatives of Islam to follow the Guru's path.

Guru Arjan's compositions reflect his familiarity with

Islam. He uses the epithets Allah, Khuda, Maulā and Khāliq for God who is merciful (*rahīm*), compassionate (*karīm*) and kind (*miharvān*). Guru Arjan refers to the *Qur'ān* and the other semitic books (*kateb*), Azrail as the angel of death, Paradise, prophets and *pīrs*, *mullās* and *shaikhs*, *faqīrs* and *darveshes*, the *qāzī* and the *hājī*, the *sharī'at* and *tariqat*, *mā'rifat* and *haqīqat*, the call to prayer, the water pot and the prayer mat, the mosque and the daily prayers, *bandagi* and *wazīfā*, the rosary and the fast, and the true ideals of Islam, like God's praises, contentment, moderation and good will. The Islamic tradition would pass away with all its *pīrs*, *paighambar*s and *auliya*, its *kateb*, its *qāzīs* and *mashāikh*, its fasts and calls to prayer, like everything else. Only Khudā and His true devotee (*bandā*) would survive.

Guru Arjan refers to some of the distinct features of people called Turk and Hindu. Khudā, Allah, Karim and Rahim, *haji*, *namāz*, *kateb*, blue clothes, and *bibisht* represent the beliefs and practices of the Turk. Rām, Gussaīyā, *Karan-kāran* and *Kirpā-dhār*, *tīrath*, *pūjā*, Veda, white clothes and *swarg* symbolize the beliefs and practices of the Hindu (who, thus, gets equated with the upholder of the Brahmanical tradition). Guru Arjan goes on to add that only those who recognize God's *hukam* may recognize God.

On the whole, there is much in the society and polity of the times that is denounced by Guru Nanak and his successors. They have no appreciation for any of the contemporary systems of religious beliefs and practices. Significantly, Guru Arjan does not equate his heritage with 'Hinduism' or Islam, nor does he identify himself with Hindus or Muslims. Just as they represent distinct traditions of religious beliefs and practices, Guru Arjan and his followers have their own distinct beliefs and practices. 'We are neither Hindu nor Musalmān'. What was implicit in the compositions of Guru Nanak and his successors is made explicit. The contemporary social order had lost its legitimacy; it was in need of utter regeneration through a new spiritual and moral



message. Guru Nanak and his successors provided the basis for regeneration and its result was the emergence of a new social order in the form of the Sikh Pañth.

### Notes and References

1. For comments on caste, see *Shabdārth Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji*, pp. 7, 10, 18, 23, 42, 53, 62, 83, 164, 504, 663, 1094, 1128, 1198, 1330, 1411.
2. For gender, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 12, 18, 19, 31, 50, 54, 72, 78-9, 90, 97, 143, 157, 162, 165-6, 225, 229, 244, 251, 413, 470, 472-3, 544, 762, 763, 785, 796, 828, 1029, 1215, 1257, 1288.
3. For comments on rites, ceremonies and social customs, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 16, 91, 358, 466, 471, 472, 554, 648, 783, 841-2, 904, 1032, 1045, 1048, 1093-4, 1287, 1289-90, 1291.
4. For comments on polity and politics, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 63, 141, 145, 225, 226, 227, 253, 254, 258, 468, 468-9, 470, 471, 472, 590, 621, 654, 729, 745, 751, 761, 1071, 1073, 1074, 1100, 1182, 1235, 1240, 1283, 1327, 1342, 1426.
5. For comments on the Brahmanical traditions, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 85, 86, 87, 117, 128, 129, 159, 274, 275, 364, 467, 470, 512, 556, 635, 637, 642, 647, 650, 663, 676, 880, 884-5, 887-8, 929-38, 1037-8, 1049-50, 1066, 1098-9, 1116-7, 1153, 1240-41, 1243, 1279-80, 1288, 1348, 1353.
6. For comments on the ascetical traditions, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 149-50, 155-6, 123-4, 159-60, 368, 634-5, 730, 908-9, 938-46, 1189-90, 1284-5, 1332, 1420-21.
7. For the Islamic tradition, both orthodox and Sūfi, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 4-5, 24, 53, 64, 83, 84, 98, 141, 143-4, 145, 319-20, 491, 550, 551, 641, 546, 662, 747, 852, 867, 885, 896-7, 1003, 1004, 1083-4, 1100, 1136, 1238, 1245, 1246, 1286.

## CHAPTER II

# Conception of God

The source of social awareness that we have noticed in the previous chapter was a new spiritual and moral vision. Of crucial importance in this vision was the conception of God. The most important attributes of God were His power and grace as two sides of the same coin. The concepts of *hukam* and *nadar* flowed from these attributes. The most important expression of grace was divine self-revelation through the Guru and the Shabad. A comprehensive concept that related to the conception of God, divine self-revelation, and the message of Guru Nanak and his successors was the Name which symbolized their religion as *nām-dharm*.

### 1. Unity, Power and Grace

Guru Nanak's religious thought is emphatically monotheistic. He believes in one God and no other. Equal emphasis on 'one' and 'no other' runs through the compositions of his successors as well. A large number of epithets are used for one and the same God. Appropriately, the symbol of unity is the figure '1' (*ik*) and '*oankār*', a person who alone is eternal (*satt*) and who alone is active (*kartā*). He is devoid of fear and enmity, He never dies and He is never born. He is self-existent. These attributes of God in what is popularly called the *mūlmantar* occur at many places in *Gurbānī*, and underscore God's transcendence. In the *Japu*, His existence before the beginning of time, in the cosmic ages, and after the end of time is emphasized. In this sense, God is equated with Truth. His is the command (*hukam*) and He is the

bestower of all gifts (*dātā*). What pleases Him is good. His greatness cannot be comprehended. He is subject to no limitation whatever.

The *Āsā dī Vār* refers to the creation of the physical and the moral world. God created Himself and His power; He looks at His creation with pleasure. He is the giver and the doer; He gives life and takes it away; pervasive everywhere, He enjoys his sport. Some have the chains of slavery on their necks and others ride horses; God alone is the doer of everything; only He can take care. He sustains life in the world; all created beings do what He ordains for them; apart from Him there is no refuge; He is the merciful one (*rahīm*) who sustains the world. Like God's transcendence and His immanence, His power and grace go together. His grace enables human beings to do what He likes; they act in accordance with His *bukam*; by doing so they become acceptable in God's court.

Everything related to God is true: the universe, the worlds, the continents and the forms He has created; His decree and His court, His ordinance and His grace. Great is His state; mighty is His Name; true is His justice; immutable is His station; He knows everyone's innermost thoughts and desires; He confers favours of His free will; He is the sole reality; all that happens is due to His will (*razā*).

Marvellous is God's creation: the varied forms of speech and scripture; the multiplicity of creation and its distinctions; the created forms and their variety; air, water; fire, the earth and the sources of life; pleasures in which the human beings are involved; union and separation; hunger and indulgence; God's worship and praise; some straying away and others following the straight path; some close to God and others far away. We can see that Guru Nanak talks of both the moral and the physical world in relation to God and his *bukam* and *nadar*.

God's power is manifest everywhere: in the nether regions and the skies, in the Vedas, Puranas and semitic

scriptures, in eating, drinking and wearing of apparel, in love, in fear and joy, in groups, species and forms, in living beings all the world over, in good and evil, in honour and dishonour, in air, water, fire and the dust-laden earth. God (*kartā, kādar*) watches all creation operating in accordance with His ordinance (*bukam*). He alone is everywhere. Having brought forth creatures He looks after them all. The creator who made them is mindful of them. He feels concerned for them.

God alone is the true formless one, without fear of annihilation. Everything else is subject to fear : the wind that blows, the rivers that flow, fire, the earth, Indra, the sun and the moon, the skies, *Dharm Rāj*, Siddhs, Buddhs and Nāths, mighty heroes, and swarms of beings coming and going. The writ of fear has been recorded over the forehead of all. Everything is false and short-lived : the ruler and the ruled, gorgeous theatres and bowers of ease and those who live in them, gold and silver and those who wear them, the human frame, beauty and the raiment, the relationship of husband and wife, the false attached to the false and oblivious of the creator, the whole world.

The conception of God put forth in the *Japuḥi* and *Āsā dī Vār* is reinforced and amplified in the rest of Guru Nanak's compositions. God alone is everywhere and in everything; there is no one else. He alone is true and pure; everything else is replete with impurity. He created Himself and He created the universe as His sport; only His grace can enable one to recognize the sole existence of the true one. The pure one is in everyone, in all men and all women. His power is operative everywhere, and everything happens in accordance with His *bukam*. The creator takes care of all His creation : this is His grace. Above the three qualities, the formless God represents the fourth state. Concealed in His creation, God is the real life of every human being. The created beings have no power; all are born in accordance with His *bukam*, and they act in accordance with it; they remain subject to death and rebirth in accordance with His

*bukam* and they are absorbed in the truth in accordance with it. Millions are created and destroyed in a moment in accordance with His *bukam*; all remain chained to death and rebirth except those to whom He shows His grace. Liberation is possible only through His *nadar*. Only through His *kirpā* one is able to realize the one in all.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad uses a number of epithets for God. The unity of God is explicitly emphasized by the use of the term *eko*. God alone is the eternal and omnipotent creator, preserver, and destroyer. He alone is the support of all; He cares for all; He is the sole giver of boons; He is the sole judge of merit. He is infinite. He is without attributes (*niranjan*) and with attributes (*gunī*). He is in everything and in everyone, and yet beyond everything and everyone. He alone is true, no other.

Guru Angad uses *nadar*, *kirpā*, *karm* and *prasād* for the grace of God. Through the *nadar* of the Sarrāf one is released from the chain of transmigration. Through God's *kirpā* one may appropriate the *shabad* of the Guru. They receive grace who preserve the capital received from the *Sāhu* (God). Guru Angad may be referring to his own position when he says that a gift received from oneself counts for nothing; the real miracle is to receive it through the grace of the Lord. There is hardly any doubt that turning to the Guru and attaining liberation are seen by Guru Angad as the mark of God's grace. By turning to the Guru one recognizes and transcends the evil prevalent in the Kaliyuga.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad looks upon divine grace and divine ordinance (*bukam*, *bhāṇā*, *razā*) as complementary expressions of the omnipotence and compassion of God. By recognizing the divine ordinance (*bukam*) one may meet the Master; all that happens is due to His Will (*razā*). Through divine ordinance, some are united and others kept wandering; some are redeemed and others remain engrossed in the world (*māyā*). The Master's command cannot be disobeyed; even kings and commanders obey His orders;

what He approves of is the best; they who obey His orders have no power of their own; one lives as ordained by Him; He sends human beings into the world and calls them back. He is all in all. No one knows what He would determine. The blind are not they who have no eyes but they who do not recognize the divine ordinance (*bukam*).

In the *bānī* of Guru Amar Das, God is uncompromisingly one. He created Himself and, therefore, there is no other. The One alone is eternally true and there is no one else. Before the creation of the three worlds there was only the formless one (*nirāṅkāra*). He is *sargun* and *nirgun* at the same time. He created the universe and became the creator. He is the only doer (*kartār*). The elements like air, water and fire, and all forms spring from Him. All living beings are His and He is of everyone. He is out there in the universe and He is here within every human frame. There is no other entity even remotely comparable with Him. He alone is all pervasive and there is no other.

The Fearless One (*nirbhau*) is always kind. The body and the soul are His gifts; He is the only giver of gifts for all and He shows the right path to those who go astray. He does everything and His *bukam* prevails everywhere. The person to whom God shows His grace (*nadar*) attains liberation. By recognizing God's *bukam*, one receives comforts of all kinds, and gains peace. The only giver is the only friend. Everything appears through His *bukam* and everything disappears through His *bukam*. He is the only Lord of all, there is no other. All have only one Master. Through His grace He shows the right path. God created Shiv and Shakti and He governs the universe. He Himself disposes, and watches His sport. Through God's grace alone one turns to the Guru and dedicates oneself to the One. The doer (*kartā*) Himself makes His devotees understand His *bukam*. The world is under the illusion of the three qualities, and the whole life passes in illusion. The one who is awakened by the Guru's grace dedicates oneself to God and

sings the nectar-like *bāṇī*. The giver of all gifts should never be forgotten. The one who remembers Him comes to no harm. God leads to loving devotion through the Guru. The ones who are dedicated to God through the Guru's grace attain God in the midst of *māyā*. God's power and grace appear to be more important to Guru Amar Das than the other attributes of an omnipotent and merciful God.

Theology forms the core of the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. The basic ideas are put forth in the *So Purkh*. The Supreme Being is the one Supreme Reality, the Primal *Purkh* who has no equal. He is immaculate, inaccessible, immeasurable, ever constant, immutable, and changeless. He is the sole creator and the sole provider. Pervasive in all creatures, He abides within all. None besides Him operates in the universe. All that He wills comes to pass. All creation is brought into being by Him and disappears into nothingness by His decree. Some are made donors and others beggars. He annuls all suffering. He is free from fear and the one who meditates on Him becomes free from fear. Union and alienation are in His power. Realization of God comes to those who by Him are enlightened. He is made manifest by the Guru's grace.

The ideas expressed in the *So Purkh* are reinforced in many other compositions of Guru Ram Das. There is only one God, one creator, one court and one command. The Primal *Purkh* is beyond all reach; He is the sole Formless Absolute. He is the sole creator, the sole cause and source of all things. He Himself creates and dissolves creation. None but He has power and His ordinance is operative in the universe. He alone confers greatness. He has no form or feature and yet He pervades all creation. He alone is outside and inside. He shows His form and meditates on it. He is the Silent One but discourses on enlightenment. He is the voluptuary and the anchorite. He Himself is Brindaban's milkmaids and Krishna grazing cows in the forest. He is the child who destroys Kansa. The depiction of God's immanence in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das is both detailed and frequent.

Guru Ram Das uses *shabad* for the divine ordinance. It is the same ordinance (*eko shabad*) everywhere. All are covered by his ordinance (*shabad*). The other terms used for the divine ordinance are *hukam*, *bhāṇā*, and *razā*. Nothing can be done on one's own; God keeps all as He likes. He alone is the Master and everyone is subject to His command (*hukam*). He does what He likes and all have to submit to His Will (*razā*). Evidently, *hukam*, *bhāṇā* and *razā* are used as synonyms.

God's *bhāṇā* tends to merge with his grace. Whomever He likes He unites with Himself. The terms generally used for grace are *nadar*, *kirpā*, *prasād*, and *dayā*. One may receive the gift of loving devotion through the Guru's grace (*nadar*). The one on whom the Beloved looks with grace (*nadar*) meditates on the feet of God. Through the grace (*kirpā*) of the True Guru one may meet God; through the grace (*dayā*) of the Guru one may meet God. It is through God's grace (*kirpā*) that one serves the True Guru. It is through the Guru's grace (*kirpā*) that one realizes the eternal, inscrutable, and infinite Beloved. Through the grace (*kirpā*) of the bestower of peace (*sukhdātā*) one may receive the word (*bachan*) of the True Guru. Everyone wishes to see God but only they see Him whom He shows Himself; only through the grace (*nadar*) of the Beloved, one turns to God. The phrase *Gurprasādi* occurs frequently in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. God cares for all human beings like father and mother.

For Guru Arjan, God is one. There is none except the one. Know Him as the one, the only one. He is both *nirgun* and *sargun*. He is *nirgun* and *sargun* at one and the same time. Unmanifest, He is *nirgun*; manifest, He is *sargun*. The unity of the *nirgun* and *sargun* God is underscored in a whole *shabad*. He remained unmanifest in a complete void (*sunṇ*) and darkness (*dhundūkārā*) and then he made Himself manifest all by Himself; He alone is the cause of all things. He is the creator of millions of Brahmas, Vishnus



and Maheshes. He alone was before the creation; he alone shall be after His creation is no more. He was at the beginning, He is in the middle, and He shall be at the end. He is the only real entity.

Unmanifest, God cannot be known. He is *agam*, *agochar*, *be-ant* and *atbāh*. He alone knows His power. Manifest in His creation, God can be known through His attributes. The Primal Being (*ād purkh*) is the creator and the doer of everything; He fills everything and He is within everyone. He is ever present (*sadā-badūrā*). He is near, not far; He is the only Master, there is no other. Whatever we see is His form (*rūp*). He is the living element in every human being. He is all pervasive but detached. God assumes multifarious forms but none of them eternally; when they are no more, there remains the everlasting one (*ekankār*). There is unity in diversity. Numerous waves arise from the water; the gold is seen in many shapes; the seeds of many kinds are sown, the fruit ripens and yields the same seed; hundreds of clouds cover the one sky, the same sky we see when the clouds part. When the illusion is shattered there is *ek ankār*.

Some of the other epithets used for God are *satt*, *kartā purkh*, *nirbhau*, *nirvair*, *akāl*, *mūrati*, *ajūni* and *saimbhau*. God is *āntarjāmī*, *bhai-bhañjan*, and *dīn-dayāl*. God is the treasure of good qualities, the giver of life; He is ever kind and forgiving. He is the Lord of the poor and the helpless. He is always just. What He does is just. He is the protector of all. He is the father and mother of all. He is the bestower of liberation. All the attributes of God cannot be known; He is the most high, without an end, without any limit. He stands revealed and yet He is unrevealed; He is within everyone and yet detached. The individual light mingles with the universal light, like the ray of the sun, the wave of water.

Two attributes of God are emphasized a little more than the others : His power and His compassion. His court is the highest court. Independent of everything, the sovereign Lord

is the perfect ruler. Whatever happens is in accordance with His will. Great is His court, and true is His throne. He is the King of kings, with everlasting flywhisk and umbrella. Whatever pleases the Supreme Lord is true justice. Whatever He does is good. He can give an honourable place to one who has no place. His order (*farmān*) is true and none can disobey it. All power (*qudrat*) belongs to Him and whatever happens is His doing. He can reduce *sultāns* and *khāns* to mere ants; he can raise the poor to mastery and rulership.

Guru Arjan uses the word *bukam* (divine order) quite frequently. Two other words for God's pleasure are *bbāṇā* and *razā*. All the three terms occur alone or in combination. One takes the round of births due to God's *bbāṇā* and everything happens according to His *razā*. It is through His *bukam* and *razā* that one praises God; he who pleases God is the real *giānī*; the real *jap* is only that which pleases Him; through His *bbāṇā* comes full knowledge. God takes care of His servant and the servant welcomes His *bukam*. There is only one sign of meeting God: the mind recognizes his *bukam*. Peace and contentment come through His *bbāṇā*. God's devotee should do what pleases God; wherever He keeps is good. The one for whom God's *bukam* is sweat is wise and honourable. 'I live as you keep me, I eat and put on what you give'. Whatever happens is God's *bbāṇā*; he who recognizes the *bukam* is absorbed in truth. Handsome is he and wise is he who accepts God's *bbāṇā*. His *bbāṇā* comes to pass; none else has the power to do anything. He who is enabled to obey God's *bukam* is given the gift of the Name.

Whatever pleases God should be acceptable to His devotees. God's *bbāṇā* is sweet. 'Whatever you do is sweet to me'. 'Whatever you wish is well. All things are set right in accordance with your *bbāṇā*'. 'Keep me as you wish'. 'Whatever you wish is well; yours is the *bukam* and *razā*. Whatever I do is what you enable me to do, I cannot do anything else'. 'Sweet is your *bbāṇā* to me'. 'You yourself are

the cause and yourself the doer. Birth and death are due to your *bukam*. Due to the *bhāṇā* of the True Guru, one comes into the world in accordance with His *bukam* and leaves it in accordance with His *bukam*. Union and separation are God's *bhāṇā*. What pleases God comes to pass. They who accept God's *bhāṇā* suffer no sorrow or misery. Whether or not one sings and listens to God's praises is God's *bhāṇā*; by recognizing His *bukam* one is absorbed in truth.

In a whole *paurī* on *bukam*, one frolics or sits idle according to the *bukam*, and one experiences *dukh* and *sukh*. One recites the Name day and night if one receives the gift, one lives or dies, one is small or great, experiences sorrow or happiness, recites the all efficacious *manitar* of the Guru, and is released from coming and going by being attached to bhakti in accordance with the *bukam*. Similarly, there is a *paurī* on *bhāṇā*. The Name is recited if the perfect Guru imparts the teaching. As He pleases, one may wander from birth to birth or one may be liberated. As He pleases, one may be allowed or denied pleasures. As He pleases, one may go to hell or heaven or cast down on earth. As He pleases, one may be attached to *bhagti*.

Guru Arjan speaks in the first person. You are the Master and you have made me your servant. My body and my soul are your gifts. You do and get everything done; nothing is done by us. We come into the world when you send us. We perform the deeds which you desire. Nothing happens without you. We have no anxiety. There we hear your command; here we sing your praises. You ordain and you undo; there can be no dispute with you. You are the father and all are your children; we play as you make us play. You have created the wrong and the right path to send men on the one or the other. Some are settled in the home and others are sent to places far and near. Some are grass-cutters and others are rulers. Some attain liberation and others are sent to hell. Some are worldly others are *bhagats*. Some are wise and others are fools; some are wide awake and others are

ignorant. Liberation and hell are in accordance with the *bukam*.

God has created the mighty ocean. Some are made ignorant *manmukhs* and stand in hell. Some are taken across by the True Guru in the true boat. Creation and destruction are through His *bukam*. Living beings are created and destroyed. He watches over His sport and enjoys all its states. He has created the universe as a wrestling arena.

*Nadar* (grace) is closely related to *bukam*. The rain comes through God's *bukam*; it is also an act of grace. Through God's grace (*kirpā*), one remembers God. Through His kindness (*dayā*) one sings his praises. The creator shows kindness and the thirst of all living beings is slaked. Through the Guru's grace (*prasād*) one receives a kind glance (*nadar*) from God. The Lord shows his kindness and one gets attached to the Guru's feet. Auspicious is the month, the day and the time when the Lord shows his grace (*nadar*) and through His grace (*kirpā*) one receives the boon of His sight (*dars*). When God shows His grace, one utters the Name with one's tongue. It is through God's grace that the gift of the Name is received as a treasure. It is through God's grace that one takes the human birth. It is through God's grace that one becomes a *bhagat* or a *giānī*. They who take refuge in God have no anxiety; they who receive His grace remain all well. The truth is ever pure and one becomes pure if one receives this truth through the Guru's grace (*nadar*). Through the Guru's grace the noose of death is cut and the body and mind enjoy peace. It is through God's grace that one gets attached to his *bhagti*. One turns dead in life and attains liberation if God shows His grace (*karm*). It is through God's kindness that one meets the Guru. God shows His kindness to the lowest of the low and they become His devoted servants. The body and the mind become cool through the all satisfying grace (*nadar*) of God.

The Islamic epithets for God include *karīm* and *rahīm*. God is the kind Master (*mibrwān Maulā*). The *mibr* of God

and His *bandagī* go together. If God (*Maulā*) shows His kindness (*mīhr*) one worships the Lord. Man performs deeds ordained by God and through His grace he conquers the mind in association with *sādh*s. Happiness comes through the Guru's sight, and through His grace one subdues the five adversaries (the senses). If one lodges the Guru's feet in one's heart, the Guru shows his grace to lead one to the Lord. Through God's grace one remembers Him all the time and acquires His hue.

The idea of grace does not infringe the omnipotence of God : it reinforces the idea that nothing happens in human affairs without His power or compassion. In the *bāṇī* of Guru Arjan, the greater emphasis is on the acceptance of the *bhāṇā* of God rather than on His great majesty and power. Expressed in diverse ways, the *bhāṇā* of God remains close to His *kirpā*.

## 2. The Guru

Guru Nanak says in the *Japuṁī* that the Guru's word is *nād* and *veda*; it is everywhere; the Guru is Brahma, Vishnu and Mahesh; the Guru is Mother Parbatī; he imparts such an understanding that one never forgets the bestower of gifts on all. There is a reference to the instruction of the one Guru. He who appropriates the Guru's word is liberated and he can liberate others. In the *Āsā dī Vār*, the Guru is praised for transforming human beings into gods in a moment. They who do not turn to the Guru are like the seedless sesame plant which flowers and blossoms but only to be filled with ash and, therefore, left standing in the field when the crop is harvested.

In *Srī Rāg*, truth is found through the perfect Guru's grace. By meditating on the Guru, one may find the ladder to scale the wall of the fort. The Guru is the ladder, the boat, and the raft. The Guru is the ship that takes across the sea. The Guru is the river, the *tīrath*; through his grace one may

bathe in the lake of truth. The Guru is found in the *sañt sabhā* which is the source of the gift of liberation. Without the Guru one cannot be free from the chain of the three qualities (*trikuṭī*) and attain to the peace of *sahaj*. Through God's grace one may recognize Him within oneself. The dirt cannot be removed without the Guru and God cannot be lodged in the heart without removing the dirt. One who knows of the Guru and yet does not turn to him can have no merit. Only the Guru can save one from remaining engrossed in *māyā*. By reflection on the Guru, the boat of truth, one may get across the ocean of transmigration. The true Guru enables one to meet God. By reflecting on the Guru one may hear the unstruck music (*anhad shabad*); *haumai* is destroyed by *anhad bāñī*. By serving the true Guru one finds the honour of *nām* from the divine court. By meeting the true Guru (Sādhū), one finds the treasure of the *shabad*. Discarding *haumai*, one should turn to the service of the Guru, the pool of water (that washes away all sins). The true Guru gives *nām* to serve God day and night. By lodging God in the heart one meets the Guru. With the true Guru as one's friend, one receives truth and honour in the divine court. The true Guru is found in *sat-saṅgat* by singing God's praises through the *shabad*. Without the instruction of the true Guru there can be no *bhagti*. He who does not meet the true Guru remains chained to death and rebirth. They who enjoy the pleasure of the true Guru are perfect and wise. The false fail to see the Guru. The mind is tuned to God only by praising Him through the Guru's *shabad*. On the whole, the Guru appears to refer to God and to the inner voice. But it refers also to Guru Nanak.

In *Rāg Prabhāṭī* there is an explicit reference to the Guru's *updes* as a precious treasure which the Sikh can find after search. In *Rāg Bhairō* and *Rāg Basant* there are references to *Gur*, *Gur kī kār*, *Gur-shabad*, *Gurmukh* and *sañt sabhā* which are suggestive of the Guru and his Sikhs. The *Siddh Gosṭ* is essentially a comparison between the way

of the *jogīs* and the way of Guru Nanak marked by *nām*, *dān* and *isnān*, the ideal of detachment (*āsā māhi nirās*), the concept of dying to the self (*jīvat marnā*) through the Guru's *shabad* to be regenerated, and the conception of the fourth state (*chauthā surin*) as the state of liberation. The *Gurmukh* who occupies the centre of the stage is essentially the ideal Sikh. Therefore, the terms used in the *Siddh Gost* in relation to the Guru, the true Guru, *Gur kā shabad*, *nām*, *shabad-guru* and *bānī* can be appreciated in a context that includes the presence of Guru Nanak and his Sikhs who met for congregational worship through the *shabad*, the *bānī* of Guru Nanak. There are *sādhiks*, *siddhs* and many other *gurus* and their *chelās*, but true understanding of the one who is manifest and concealed at one and the same time comes by turning to the Guru.

One may meet the true Guru (*satguru*) through God's grace (*nadar*). Having wandered through many lives, one may listen to the word (*shabad*) of the true Guru. None is a greater giver (*dātā*) than the true Guru : on meeting him one finds the truth and one's self is eliminated; the whole truth is revealed by the true Guru. They who imbibe the Guru's instruction are enabled to cross the ocean of mortality by God's grace. By meeting the true Guru one attains peace; the name of God is lodged in one's mind; it is received through God's grace; *haumai* is burnt by the *shabad* and one becomes free from hope and fear. Instruction of the true Guru leaves no need for any other kind of instruction. Through God's grace (*karm*) and the grace (*kirpā*) of the Guru one may find God and be absorbed in the truth. Without the Guru there can be no *giān*. Without the true Guru, the path cannot be found. Praise the true Guru who possesses greatness; through God's grace one may meet him; he removes evil from human beings by placing his hand on their forehead; if the Lord is pleased one finds all the nine treasures (*naunidh*). Through the true Guru's guidance one may receive true instruction and become true, abiding in the

inner *tirath* of the self with compassion for living beings and charity towards all. The path of sincere dedication that leads to God cannot be found without the true Guru.

Guru Angad talks of the perfect Guru (*pūrā guru*) who is no other than Guru Nanak. They who had been instructed by Guru Nanak needed no further instruction. Hundreds of moons and thousands of suns may rise but in spite of their light, there would be utter darkness without the Guru. This may safely be taken to refer to Guru Nanak. It was a miracle that the master (Guru Nanak) had bestowed the gift of Guruship on Guru Angad. The key to open the lock of the mind was held only by Guru Nanak (and his successors). Significantly, Guru Angad appears to use the term 'Guru' for Guru Nanak all the time.

The terms *satguru* and *guru* appear frequently in Guru Amar Das's compositions. The two terms appear to be used interchangeably. One should serve the True Guru with a singleminded devotion. The True Guru is the master who is true and pure and he is known through the *shabad*. By serving the True Guru all attachment is burnt and one becomes a renunciant in the home. They who turn away from the True Guru, their foreheads are blackened. By serving the True Guru one receives eternal peace and one's light mingles with the divine light. Without the Guru there can be no peace and no end to the cycle of death and rebirth. The Guru lights the fire of knowledge and the darkness of ignorance goes away. He who walks in accordance with the Guru's will suffers no sorrow; there is nectar in the Guru's will and one attains the state of bliss. The only right path to liberation is found from the Guru. By joining the Guru's *sangat* and living in accordance with his *shabad*, one is redeemed. The perfect Guru has promulgated *nām* and *shabad* to enable human beings to meet God. Without the Guru the self is never eradicated. The gift is in the hands of the giver and it is received through the Guru. Not only are the two terms interchangeable, the reference more



frequently is to the personal Guru, that is, Guru Nanak and his successors.

Guru Ram Das generally talks of the Guru, the True Guru, and the Perfect Guru. These terms can refer to God and to the personal Guru, that is, Guru Nanak and his successors. However, most of the time Guru Ram Das appears to refer to the personal Guru. We may refer to some of the statements actually made in his compositions. God Himself is the True Guru; He Himself is the disciple; He Himself gives instruction. As the True Guru, God Himself effects the union. The True Guru shows the right path. Liberation is not possible without the True Guru. Guru Ram Das refers to *Guru kā bhāṇā* just as he refers to *Guru kā shabad* or *Guru kā bachan*. The service of the True Guru is real service only when one lives in accordance with the wishes of the True Guru. The True Guru is the real *sādhū*. The Guru is the real *sādhū*. The disciple of the Guru dedicates his life to the Guru: 'I have placed my body and mind at the disposal of the Guru; I have sold my head at a very high price'. This high price is nothing short of liberation. Only through God's grace may one sell one's head to the Guru. The Perfect Guru reveals God; union is attained by selling the head to the Guru. We are like uninstructed children; the Guru, the True Guru, is the instructor who makes us wise through his instruction. The Guru gives the sword of *giān* to kill death itself. On meeting the Perfect Guru, one may see God's presence. Govind is the Guru and the Guru is Govind: there is no difference between them. 'We regard the True Guru as *Pārbrāhm*'.

Guru Arjan refers to *Akāl Purkh* as Gurudev. There is a whole stanza at the beginning and the end of the *Bāvan Akharī* which relates to Gurudev. He is the mother, he is the father, he is the Lord *Parmesar*. He is the friend who destroys ignorance; he is a close relative and the real brother. Gurudev is the giver of the divine Name as the true *maṅtar*. He is the embodiment of peace, truth and wisdom; He is

the philosopher's stone that turns others into philosopher's stone by His touch. Gurudev is *tīrath* with the pool of nectar and bathing as knowledge (*giān*); Gurudev is the real doer and the remover of all sins; he purifies the sinners. Gurudev was in the beginning, He shall be at the end, He is in all the cosmic ages; His divine *manītar* redeems all, one prays to Gurudev that He may enable one to meet God in the *sangāt* so that through His grace 'a sinner like me is redeemed'. Gurudev is the True Guru, *Pārbrāhm*, *Parmesar*; He is the God of Nanak to whom we bow in salutation. Gurudev here is God; he is the True Guru.

A kind glance of the True Guru is the source of limitless happiness and rulership: 'my mind and body shall become cool only if he gives the divine Name'. Discard your own wisdom and touch the feet of the Guru so that you may worship the One who is the King of kings; hope for him who is the trust of all. All curses are lifted by meeting the Guru. Only he who eradicates *haumai* can serve the True Guru. Discard all other means and concentrate on the perfect Guru to be affiliated to the only one. All problems are solved through the instruction of the True Guru: the nectar of the Name of Rām is lodged in your heart by his all-satisfying grace. The gift of the Name is received from the perfect Guru through his grace. None is so great as the Guru: only he can lead you to the Truth, and none else. Therefore, turn to the service of the True Guru. Worship Guru-*Parmesar* with the loving devotion of your mind and body. The True Guru is the giver of life; he is the support of everyone. Guru-*Parmesar* is one; recite his Name.

The true Name is found only if the True Guru becomes kind. There is just one way and no other. All other means are futile. Discard every other means and hold on to the feet of the Guru. 'Auspicious was the time when I met the True Guru. All illusions have gone by treading the path of God'. Outside and inside is his *bāñī*, uttered by him and shown by him. The Guru says that there is one, only one; there

shall be no other. He who has recognized the Guru as true does not have to fear anything. A lamp is lighted in the temple of the mind by meeting the True Guru through God's grace.

In the *bāṇī* of Guru Arjan, Guru Nanak is also the True Guru and, by implication, his successors too. It is necessary to keep in view these two levels suggested simultaneously at places. Through God's grace one may obtain all the fruit by serving the fulfiller of wishes and the bestower of the treasure of peace. The True Guru is the Lord, the pool of nectar that remains full all the time. 'So long as I did not recognize the *bukam* I remained miserable. By meeting the Guru, I have recognized the *bukam* and I am at peace. None is an enemy (in my eyes) now, and no opponent, and none is bad. By serving the Guru, Nanak has become a servant of God'. The Guru here is not God. He is the human Guru. None attains to liberation without the Guru. Reflect on this. Rare in the world are they who remember the Guru in the depth of their being and utter the Name of the Guru with their tongue, who see the True Guru with their eyes and hear the Guru's Name with their ears, who are suffused with the Guru and find a place in the divine court; only he receives this gift to whom God is gracious.

One who studies the Smṛiti and the Śāstra comes to know that illusion does not disappear without the True Guru. One may perform countless rituals, there is no release from the chain of transmigration. One may wander in all the four directions, there is no place without the Guru's place. Through great good fortune one finds the Guru and recites the Name. Truth is ever pure and they to whom God is gracious attain it and become pure. The mind is enlightened by meeting the perfect Guru as a mark of good fortune. There is no liberation without the Guru; the True Guru, *Pārbrāhm*, *Parmesar*, redeems all. Fear is destroyed by taking refuge in the Guru. One meditates on the True Guru through God's grace. He who is protected by the True Guru comes to no

harm. Wonderful is the Guru's greatness; all living beings are redeemed by the Lord through his *darshan*. They who have complete trust in God receive whatever they desire; by meeting the perfect Guru all anxiety is gone. The service of the Guru and obedience to him save one from death. The Guru who shows the path to those who have strayed from the right path is found through good fortune. He who serves the perfect Guru remains stable at God's door. The perfect Guru teaches that peace comes by accepting God's will.

'Perfect is my Guru, my Guru is Perfect'. The Perfect Guru has destroyed all anxiety. The recitation of God's praises all the time has made him the protector. 'I have seen the True Guru exactly as I had heard of him'. He invites the separated ones as representative of the divine court; he gives the *mantra* of the divine Name, and cures the malady of *haumai*. The True Guru has invited those whose union was ordained by God.

In a whole passage on the True Guru, the Guru is equated with God. 'My True Guru is not dependent on any one. Whatever is established by my True Guru is true. My True Guru gives the gifts to all. My True Guru is the creator of things. No *dev* is comparable with the Guru. Only the fortunate one serves him. My True Guru looks after all with kindness. My True Guru can give life to the dead. The greatness of my True Guru has become manifest everywhere. My True Guru is the refuge for those who have no refuge. May I be hundred times a sacrifice to the True Guru who has shown the path to liberation. He who serves the Guru entertains no fear. He who serves the Guru faces no sorrow. Study the Smriti and the Ved, says Nanak; there is no difference between the Guru and *Pārābrahm*'.

In another passage the True Being is the True Guru, *Parmesar*, by meeting whom one crosses to the other bank. The dust of his feet purifies the sinners. At his court are the mythical tree and the cow to fulfil all desires. Contentment comes from his service and one receives from him the gift

of the Name. When one meets the perfect Guru, who is the philosopher's stone, one is transformed into a philosopher's stone. There is no desire for *Baikunth* or even liberation (*mukti*) when one attains *ek anikār* through the grace of the True Guru. No one knows the nature of the service of the Guru who is the unknowable Pābrahm. He who has good fortune on his forehead is enabled to serve him and become a *sevak*. The Veda does not know the greatness of the Guru. The True Guru is God. The difference between God and the Guru is minimal; the human Guru is not God but he is like God.

### 3. *Shabad-Bāṇī*

The terms *shabad* and *bāṇī* are used by Guru Nanak in the *Japujī*. In *Srī Rāg*, it is stated that we look good at the Guru's door only if we know the *shabad*. *Anhad shabad* is found by reflecting on the Guru; *anhad bāṇī* eradicates *haumai*. There is no understanding without the *shabad*. God is praised through the Guru's *shabad* which is beyond the reach of death. The woman who gets rid of self and adorns herself with the Guru's *shabad* finds the spouse in the home. By lodging the Guru's *shabad* in the mind, *haumai* is eradicated. The *shabad* in the mind is the profit gained from *nām*. They who are absorbed in the *shabad* are sweet like the juice of sugarcane. The Guru's *shabad* is the collirium of *giān*: it leads to peace and liberation. All illusion is removed by the pure *bāṇī*. The *shabad* leads to the service of God and, paradoxically, awakens one to life after death-in-life. Reflection on the *shabad* is the Guru's service. There is no stability without the *shabad*. The treasure of the *shabad* is within; it enables one to shed the self. The *shabad* leads to the recognition of the true creator; it is the philosopher's stone that imparts its own quality to others through God's grace. They who reflect on the *shabad* are dear to God. He who reflects on the *shabad* does not need the Vedas or the

yoga; *māyā* has no lure for him. The *Gurmukh* is attached to the truth through the *shabad* and sees God everywhere; through God's grace the *shabad* is lodged firmly within and the illusion vanishes; the one without any sign, colour or shadow is recognized through the *shabad*. Fruitful is the life of those who are redeemed by reflection on the *shabad* of the Guru and redeem others. True is the Guru's *shabad* that leads to liberation. There is only one *shabad* and it is recognized through the Perfect Guru. All *nāds* and *veds* are subsumed in *Gurbānī*. On the whole, in the compositions of Guru Nanak the *shabad* refers to God's creation and the divine voice within human beings. Possibly, it refers also to the *bānī* of Guru Nanak.

Guru Angad refers to *Gur kār shabad* which serves as the antidote to *haumai*. Since the Guru for Guru Angad is Guru Nanak, the *shabad* of the Guru refers to the *bānī* of Guru Nanak. The Guru's *shabad* is meant for all, whether *Jogīs*, Brahmans, Khatri or Shudras. Reflection on the *shabad* induces one to turn towards God. Whereas the Vedas talk of good and bad deeds, of reward and punishment, of hell and heaven, of high and low, and how the world whirls in transmigration, the nectar-*bānī* reveals the essence as it has sprung from *giān* and *dhiān*; it was uttered by the Guru and understood by the Guru. One meditates on it through God's grace. It reveals that the whole creation functions in accordance with the divine ordinance. It eradicates *haumai* so that human beings may become acceptable (in the divine court). Both *shabad* and *bānī* refer primarily to the *bānī* of Guru Nanak as the vehicle of divine revelation.

Guru Amar Das can use *shabad* and *bānī* in the literal sense of utterance but generally these terms carry other meanings as well. The *shabad* fills the whole universe as the creation of God who is present everywhere. God is true and true is His *bānī*. He is unknowable and fathomless. He cannot be known without the Guru's grace. Through the Guru's grace He is lodged inside and praised through the

*shabad*. The true *bāṇī* is the source of truth in all the four cosmic ages. Reflection on the true *bāṇī* and *shabad* comes from the grace of the True Guru. By reflection on the Guru's *shabad* one may die-in-life by discarding the self and lodging *nām* in the mind. Without the *shabad*, the dirt cannot be removed and one suffers the humiliation of death and rebirth. God is praised through the *shabad* and reflection on the *shabad* leads to truthful living. The *shabad* of the Guru enables one to meet God through His grace. *Nām* is lodged in the mind through the Guru's *shabad* if it is sung in love and not as an outward demonstration of piety. *Nām* springs from the *shabad* which leads to union. Without the *shabad*, one's life is a waste. There is only one nectar, that of the *shabad*, and it is tasted by turning to the Guru. There is only one Guru, one *bāṇī* and one *shabad*; the true merchandise is only in the true shop; it is found through the grace of the Guru; the profit is *nām*. Praise be to the *bāṇī* of the Perfect Guru; it has sprung from the Perfect Guru as the means of absorption in truth. By appropriating the *shabad* of the Guru a woman becomes *sadā-suhāgan* by meeting the true spouse. By reflecting on the Guru's *shabad* one finds the nine treasures within oneself. True is the *bāṇī* of the True Guru; it reveals the truth within. True is the *shabad* of the True One and true is his praise; it removes *haumai* and lodges truth within for redemption. The bestower of peace shows His grace and adorns one with the Guru's *shabad*; it removes *haumai* and everything is received through the Guru's service. The *shabad* of the Guru is the nectar-*bāṇī*; it reveals *nām*; the true God is lodged inside and the inside is purified. Like Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das compares the Vedic dispensation with that of *Gurbāṇī-Shabad* to suggest the superiority of the latter. Through his grace, the Guru has given the *shabad* and the taste of the pure *bāṇī* of the Guru. On the whole, there is greater emphasis on the *bāṇī* of the Guru as *shabad* than on *shabad* as God's creation.

For Guru Ram Das, true is God and true is His *bāṇī*;

He is known through the *shabad*. True is the *bāṇī* and true the *shabad* when one loves the truth. The *bāṇī* is revealed for all the four ages; it reveals the truth. Very often, the term *bāṇī* is found in association with the Guru. *Gurbāṇī* is the light of the world; it may be appropriated through grace. In pursuit of devotion to God one sings the *bāṇī* of the Guru day and night. The *bāṇī* of the Guru is the sweet nectar. One receives the truth, contentment, the bliss of peace, and *bāṇī* from the perfect Guru. The term *bāṇī* occurs in association with *nām* as well as *shabad* and Guru.

There are verses or even single lines in which two or more of the terms are used. These lines and verses clarify the usage further. True is the *bāṇī* and true the *shabad*; this realization comes through the Guru's grace. There is one *bāṇī*, one Guru, and one *shabad* for reflection; true is the shop and true the merchandise; the storehouse is full of jewels. True is the praise, true the *bāṇī*, and peace comes through the *shabad*. The gift of the Guru is *bāṇī-shabad*. The *bāṇī* of the Guru is meant for all the four directions; by listening to it one is absorbed in the true Name. The *bāṇī* of the Guru is understood through the Guru by getting dyed in the *shabad*. There is much greater emphasis on the equation between *shabad* and *bāṇī*, that is, between the *shabad* of the Guru and *Gurbāṇī*.

The *shabad* heard from the True Guru is the song of joy. It is lodged in the hearts of those for whom it is decreed from the divine court. There are some who indulge in much talk but no one attains God through mere talk. The True Guru proclaims the *shabad* as the song of joy. They who meditate on God by turning to the Guru become pure; their family, and all those who are associated with them, become pure. They who recite, they who hear, and they who lodge it in the heart become pure. The state of bliss (*sahaj*) does not spring from *karm-kāṇḍ*, and without attaining this state the fear of death does not vanish. The fear of death does not vanish through any other means. The mind made impure by



this fear cannot be washed clean by any other means. It is washed by attachment to the *shabad* and meditation on God. The state of bliss springs from the grace of the Guru; only then the fear vanishes.

There is no doubt that *shabad* is used for divine self-revelation, as for *hukam* at places. Greatly fortunate are they who serve the True Guru and remain absorbed in the One through the true *shabad*. Here the *shabad* may be taken to refer to divine self-revelation. Elsewhere, however, the *shabad* is equated clearly with the *shabad* of the Guru when the terms used are *Gurvāk*, *Satgur-bachan* and *Gur-shabad* in the context of *sat-saṅgat*. Similarly, the word *bāṇī* may be treated as a synonym for *shabad*. The *sānts* are told, for example, to serve God whose *bāṇī* is supreme. The *bāṇī* of the True Guru is a gift coming from God. However, like the *shabad*, *bāṇī* is used also for the *bāṇī* of the Guru in the context of *sat-saṅg*.

Indeed, *shabad* and *bāṇī* for Guru Ram Das are most often simply *Gurbāṇī*. 'God's devotee Nanak utters the *bāṇī* replete with merit; through *Gurbāṇī* one is absorbed in the Name'. The *bāṇī* of the True Guru is the nectar-word (*amrit-bachan*); whoever recites it quaffs *amrit*. The *bāṇī* of the *bhagat-jan* is supreme. By listening to the *amrit-bāṇī* of the *bhagat-jan* one contemplates God. The *Har-jan* is supreme and so is his *bāṇī*; he utters it for the benefit of others. The use of the terms *bhagat-jan* and *Har-jan* does not mean that the reference is not to *Gurbāṇī*. In any case, there is a direct reference to *Gur kī bāṇī*: they who turn to it in love are redeemed in this world and the next through the grace of the Creator. By constant uttering of *Gurbāṇī*, God is lodged in the heart. Devotion arises from tasting the *shabad* of the Guru in the *saṅgat*; both the body and the mind are regenerated by praising God through *Gurbāṇī*. *Guru kī shabad* and *Gurbāṇī* stand equated here, and elsewhere. Through great good fortune may we meet the Guru and be redeemed through the Guru's *shabad*. We may know God

through the Guru's *bachan*. *Gurbānī* shows the unseeable God. The *bānī* of the True Guru is the embodiment of truth, and one becomes true through *Gurbānī* which holds the key to liberation. '*Bānī* is Guru and Guru is *Bānī*'. The *Shabad*-Guru comes into parallel prominence with the personal Guru.

'Inside and outside is your *bānī*', says Guru Arjan, 'you have yourself spoken it and revealed it'. 'God is ours and we are God's devoted servants; He has given us the true *shabad* of the Guru'. Lodge the Guru's *shabad* in the mind and repeat *nām* so that all anxiety is gone. Recite the *bānī* of Govind which has been spoken by the Sadhu, the Guru. The true *shabad* is always pure. The fortunate ones lodge the *amrit-bānī* in their hearts. The pure *amrit-bānī* should be sung all the time. The Master has uttered the *bānī-shabad*; it should be sung, heard and read every day; the Perfect Guru has provided this protection. The protection of the *sevak* has been revealed in all the worlds: the servant lives on hearing the *bānī* of the devotee (of God). Thus, the *shabad* as divine self-revelation is reinforced and enriched by the *shabad* as the *bānī* of the Guru as the vehicle of revelation. The *bānī* that has come from God (*dhur kī bānī*) to remove all anxiety (*jīn saglī chīnt mīṭāī*) can refer to both the divine word and the Guru's *shabad* at one and the same time.

#### 4. *Nām*

The concept of *nām* is more complex than that of the Guru or the *shabad*. For Guru Nanak, God's name is the True One. The True God's names are true. The Name is everywhere in the whole creation of God. It washes away the dirt of sins. The Name should never be forgotten, not even amidst the enjoyment of political power, riches and precious articles, supranatural powers of the highest order or the most beautiful women. The Name of Har is superior to millions of ritual acts and other modes of worship. The True Name

is the redeemer; it is a treasure of trust; it should never be forgotten; he who appropriates the Name is the King of kings. Without the Name, one remains miserably in illusion. Guru Nanak prefers the Name over all the supranatural powers. Whatever is created is bound to be destroyed; the Name alone is everlasting. Thirst is never quenched without the Name which is the only remedy for the misery of dual affiliation (*dubidhā*). He who prays for the Name of *Har* may be absorbed in *Brahm* through His grace. One should hear the Name, read the Name, and act in accordance with the Name. Nothing is more efficacious for this world or the next. There is no liberation without the Name of Rām. One who turns to the Guru's *shabad*, and meditates on the Name which is the source of peace, can do away with *mamtā*, *māyā* and *haumai*. The world suffers from the disease of mortality and the remedy lies in the Name; pray for the Name. Some read the Vedas and others read the Puranas but Guru Nanak knows nothing of where and when; he knows only the Name. He who remains absorbed in the Name becomes liberated and receives honour in the divine court. The Name is more efficacious than all the Brahmanical or ascetical practices. Guru Nanak has seen the whole universe very closely, asked *giānīs* and *pandits*, asked gods and great men, and listened to the *siddhs* in meditation, there is nothing comparable to the True One and the true Name; all other thought is raw and blind. By listening to the Name comes understanding, *haumai* goes away, peace comes through the Name, the mind is stilled; the Name is the means of meditation on God. There is only one path and only one door; the Guru is the ladder and the truth is within; all comforts and peace spring from the true Name. The only means of liberation, honour and worship is the Name. There is no other object of worship than the One who is everywhere; recite the Name of Rām in your mind and reflect on the Guru's *shabad*. The Name is above all *karm* and *dharm*. Guru Nanak would wash the feet of those who love

the True One by turning to the Guru, who are immersed in the Name and become a pure *tīrath*, who have removed the dirt of *haumai*, who have discarded greed and attachment, and who have risen above the distinctions of *jāti* and *varna*; such coins are rare in the world that are found to be true when tested and put into the divine treasury.

For Guru Angad, there is only one nectar and no other; it is the Name lodged in the mind through the grace of the Guru. Only they drink this nectar in love who are ordained by God to drink. Only they are possessors of the treasury whom God has given merit; only they are possessors of the store house whom he has given the key; only they who have merit are acceptable to God; they receive the gift of the Name through God's grace.

Ask for the Name, meditate on the Name, and be absorbed in the Name, says Guru Amar Das. They who serve the Guru receive the treasure of the Name. They who make the inexhaustible Name their support enjoy peace in all the four cosmic ages. The Name is found from the Guru. It is received through God's grace. The Perfect Guru has promulgated the Name and shown the light to the world by singing the praises of God through the Name. *Haumai* is destroyed by meditating on the One with the Name lodged within. He who is absorbed in the Name is beyond the reach of death. 'I live so long as I remember the Name; without the Name I die in a moment'. Guru Amar Das hungers for the true Name so much that he is never satiated by praising God. The Name is rare in the Kaliyuga; it is found by turning to the Guru. There is no liberation without the Name. The Name is the most precious treasure in the Kaliyuga; the devotees of God gain this treasure and find God; by serving the True Guru the Name is lodged in the mind and the devotee meditates on it day and night. The *nectar* of the Name is always sweet; it is tasted through the Guru's *shabad*. The true *bāñī* leads to liberation by lodging God in the mind; one meditates on the Name through the True Guru. The

Name is supreme in all the cosmic ages. The *rasāyaṇ* of the Name is made attractive by the Guru's *shabad*; by immersing in the Name one gets rid of the dirt of *māyā* and *moh*; the true *nectar* of the Name brings peace by eradicating *haumai* when God is realized through the Guru's *shabad*; inner peace comes through the Guru's instruction. Truth never becomes old and the Name never becomes soiled. The Name received from the Perfect Guru is the source of greatness. Guru Amar Das prays for greatness through the Name.

Guru Ram Das gives great importance to the Name. Like God, the Name at one level is immaculate and inaccessible; it is also pervasive and operative in all spots. The Name is our Lord; nothing is supreme over it. To be indifferent to the Name is to be indifferent to God. They who are forgetful of the Name are thoughtless and unfortunate; they remain in the grip of *māyā*. The jewel of the Name is found by God's grace. Meditation on the Name comes through God's grace. By putting faith in the Name one's clan and family are redeemed; one's suffering and hunger vanish. By fixing faith in the Name foul thinking is cast off, understanding dawns, *haumai* is shed and all maladies are cured. Doubt is annulled by devotion to the Name, and no suffering comes thereafter. The Name of the Lord is our father, mother, helper and friend.

The equation of the Name with the *shabad* brings in the Guru. Devotion to the Name is acquired through the Guru's grace. Only they meditate on the Name who turn to the Guru. Only they laud the Name who are united to the Guru. By the Guru's guidance comes meditation on the Name. The Name is obtained from the Perfect Guru who reveals it in our heart. The gracious Guru instructs us in the Name. Rare are those who contemplate the Name by the Guru's guidance. The Name is uttered in the presence of the Guru. They who laud the Name by the Guru's guidance are universally acclaimed. The Name is lodged in the heart by the True Guru and its repetition leads the mind to bliss. Through great good fortune is the Name obtained by the

Guru's guidance. They who are deprived of the touch of the Guru remain ignorant reprobates; by the guidance of the True Guru is tasted the nectar of the Name. The Name signifies God at one level; at another, it signifies the *shabad* which is identified with the *shabad* of the Guru. They who love the Name are the true singers of God's praises; they appropriate the true *bānī* and reflect on the *shabad*; they sing the praises of God if the True Guru so wills. Thus, *shabad* and *bānī* become synonymous and tend to become synonymous with *nām*. Reflection on *shabad-bānī* is a way of meditation on the Name.

The Name is enshrined in the *shabad*. The Name annuls fear and one acquires bliss through the Guru's *shabad*. The *bānī* of the one who has turned to the Divine Preceptor is the Name. By 'listening to the Name' one finds peace; one's mind is fulfilled, and all sorrows vanish. Here the Name is assumed to be the Guru's *shabad*. All supranatural powers come from 'listening to the Name', and all one's desires are fulfilled. By 'listening to the Name' comes poise, and from poise comes joy. By 'listening to the Name' comes purity and self-restraint; the self is illumined and realized; sins are annulled and truth is attained.

The True One has the true Name; He is the True Name, In *Rāg Mārī*, Guru Arjan mentions a large number of God's attributes and His familiar names to make a distinction between *kirtam-nām* and *sat-nām*. The former refers to the terms appropriate for God as the creator; the latter is appropriate for His primal state. The epithets like *Har-nām* and *Rām-nām* refer to the name of God in both the states. *Nām-simranā*, *jaṇnā* or *bhajnā* and *dhiāunā* are the terms used for the remembrance and recitation of God's name and meditating on it. However, the *amrit-nām* is also meant to be sung. It is sung by those with whom God is pleased. Their thirst is quenched and by tasting the Name they become immortal. The treasure of the Name is found by those who lodge the Guru's *shabad* in their mind. Only he utters the

Name to whom God is gracious; he listens to and sings God's praises. *Har-nām* is the *manitarg* given by the True Guru; with its support, all affairs are set right. Whoever is given the Name by the Guru loses all fear. In a whole *Āshṭpadī*, Guru Arjan prays for the Name. He who loves *Gurbāṇī* receives the grace of the Guru and the boon of the Name. There are numerous forms of *karm*, *dharm* and *kiryā* but nothing equals the Name which is far above them all. Guru Arjan instructs human beings to sing the Name all the time and everywhere, day and night, with every breath and morsel, in joy and sorrow. With reflection on the unique Name of God, the dry and dead mind is regenerated. Taking out of the ocean of fire the Guru comes to the help of human beings with the cooling nectar of the Name. In several verses Guru Arjan dwells on the support of the Name. The boiling cauldron is stilled by the cool effects of the Name, and the Guru puts an end to death and rebirth; the chain is cut loose from the feet to lead to liberation; the egg of illusion is broken and the mind is illumined. By singing God's praises in the *sādh-saṅg* one may recite the Name through His grace. 'Now that I have found the wealth of the Name', sings Guru Arjan, 'there is no anxiety and all thirst is quenched, as it was ordained'. The Guru has given this priceless jewel through his grace. The trader of *Rām-nām* has become fearless. A lamp has been lighted and the whole age is redeemed by the *nām-dharm*.

Thus, as a whole, the Name is equated with God's name and with *shabad-bāṇī*; it is also equated with the transcendent God and the whole creation. Guru Arjan's *nām-dharm* refers to the whole system promulgated by Guru Nanak and his successors. The Name leads to the 'fourth state' (*chauthā pad*) due to its equation with the primal God, a state that is beyond the 'three qualities'. This state has a direct bearing on the conception of liberation.

## Notes and References

1. For God and His attributes in general, see *Shabdārth Srī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, pp. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8-9, 10-12, 23, 27, 39, 45, 57, 71, 72, 83, 84, 98, 102, 104, 108, 113, 120, 128, 130, 174, 176, 211, 223, 258, 276, 277, 350, 376, 379, 397, 463, 464, 467, 530, 541, 542, 555, 557, 567, 586, 587, 599, 736, 827, 862, 863, 893, 894, 1037-8, 1051, 1082-3, 1122, 1215, 1254, 1279-80.
2. For the concept of *bukam*, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 1, 2, 6, 8, 55, 66, 74, 180, 421, 468, 599, 636, 1036-7, 1107, 1289.
3. For the concept of *nadar*, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 2, 66, 190, 193, 421, 465, 931, 1172, 1188, 1291.
4. For the position and importance of the Guru, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 2, 8, 12, 13, 17, 20, 21, 30, 33, 39, 40, 41, 49-50, 5203, 54, 59, 61, 65, 66, 137-8, 149, 167, 169-70, 170, 171, 172, 229, 239, 244, 250, 262, 310, 314, 361, 387, 450-51, 463, 466, 645, 854, 855, 882, 895, 943, 1125, 1126, 1170, 1271, 1310-12, 1328-9, 1421, 1422.
5. For the concept and importance of *shabad-bānī*, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 4, 7, 8, 13, 19, 21, 29, 33, 34, 55, 61, 99, 100, 152, 158, 159, 192, 221, 223, 228, 496, 545, 597, 611, 644, 646, 686, 688, 751, 754, 759, 679, 814, 879, 907, 908, 909, 944, 982, 1039, 1040, 1041, 1057, 1066, 1069, 1070, 1125, 1188, 1308, 1334, 1423-4.
6. For the connotation and importance of *Nām*, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 1, 2, 3, 4, 14, 26, 53, 61, 62, 64, 86-7, 100, 101, 105, 113, 142, 147, 190, 196, 211, 212, 240, 352, 355, 387, 401, 405, 437, 467, 490, 513, 548, 559, 618, 687, 732, 814, 863, 876, 880, 932, 986, 1002, 1040, 1049, 1050, 1083, 1127, 1144, 1211, 1225, 1239, 1241-2, 1248, 1279, 1327, 1333, 1341, 1345, 1387.



### CHAPTER III

## Conception of Liberation

In the *Japuji*, Guru Nanak poses the basic question : 'how to become truthful (*sachiār*) by demolishing the wall of falsehood'. He gives a crisp answer : 'by living in accordance with *bukam* and *razā*'. Both the objective and the means to attain it relate to liberation in life.

The purpose of human life is liberation (*muktī*) from the cycle of death and rebirth. The state of liberation is attainable during one's lifetime. The liberated-in-life is *jīvan-mukta*. It is a state of bliss and peace. But it is not a state of passive or inert bliss. Living in accordance with *bukam*, both before and after the experience of liberation, is the basic commandment. The liberated-in-life remains committed to social obligations in a spirit of detachment with a larger concern for the welfare of others.

The path is not easy, particularly because worldly life is not to be renounced but transformed. The world is real. It ensnares both the body and the mind. To emphasize the power of attachment to the world, Guru Nanak refers to *māyā*, *mamtā* and *haumai*. Another way is to dwell on the importance of *kām*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *moh* and *haṅkāṛ*. These five terms refer in a way to *māyā*, *mamtā* and *haumai*. Yet another set of five mentioned by Guru Nanak are *rāj*, *māl*, *rūp*, *jāt* and *joban*. These terms refer to political power, material wealth, social status and sensual pleasures. All these are obstacles on the path of liberation. The proper way to surmount them is *bhagti*. Guru Nanak and his successors define the path of *bhagti* in their own way, the Sikh way of *bhagti*. What we have observed about God, his *bukam*

and *nadar*, the Guru, his *shabad* and *bānī*, and the Name becomes directly relevant for *bhagti* as a means to liberation-in-life. The conception of liberation-in-life gets clarified with reference to the image of the ideal Sikh in *Gurbānī* and the role of the *saṅgat* in which *kīrtan* and *kathā* are performed. An essential feature of the Sikh way of *bhagti* is supplication (*ardās*). Guru Tegh Bahadur's preoccupation with liberation further clarifies its conception.

### 1. *Māyā*, *Mamtā* and *Haumai*

The obstacles on the path of liberation are difficult to negotiate because they relate at once to the personal and social life of the individuals and their psyche. As Guru Nanak says in *Srī Rāg*, there is pleasure in gold; there is pleasure in silver; there is pleasure in the smell of things fragrant; there is pleasure in horses; there is pleasure in the bridal bed; there is pleasure in mansions; there is pleasure in sweets; and there is pleasure in flesh. When there are so many pleasures of the body, how can the Name be lodged in it? Guru Arjan says that human beings are engrossed in the pleasure of clothes, gold and silver, which become dust in the end; they take pleasure in horses, elephants and chariots; they do not remember even their kith and kin; they forget their creator. The thirst for *māyā* is never slaked; one remains attached to one's wife, sons and relations; wealth and youth lure the world due to greed and *abāṅkār*; the whole world is intoxicated by the herb of attachment. Guru Nanak refers to *māyā*'s colour as *sūbhā* (a colour that fades); the one whose illusion is removed by the pure *bānī*, acquires the colour *lāl* (a colour that never fades). Guru Amar Das advises the young woman who is enamoured of *sūbhā* to wear the *lāl* dress of the true *shabad* and to put on the ornaments of love and awe.

As an antidote to *mamtā*, God is seen as representing all kith and kin. 'My father, my mother is the Name of God',

says Guru Amar Das, 'it is my brother and my relations'. They who accept the Guru's *bhānā* are all Sikhs, friends and relatives. These new ties are meant to weaken the hold of *mamtā*. They who reflect on the *shabad* to become devotees of the formless God (*nirāṅkār*), listen to the Guru's instruction and discard their own conceits, remain absorbed in meditation day and night to experience the state of liberation-in-life. They suffer from the disease of *haumai* and *mamtā* no longer; they have no fear of death, and they are not touched by attachment with the purifying Name lodged in their heart. There are those who call themselves *Rājas*, *Khāns* or *Maliks*; there are others who call themselves *sāhus*, amass wealth, and lose all honour by attaching themselves to the 'other'; there are beggars and givers of charities, with the same Lord over their heads. Without the Name, they are all frightened of death, like men of the market. Pursuit of falsehood brings no profit; it comes only from the pursuit of truth.

Human beings remain preoccupied with themselves, suffering from the malady of self-centredness (*haumai*). In egoism they come into the world and depart; they are born and they die; give away and receive; make gain and incur loss; seek to be truthful and remain false; enter hell and heaven; experience joy and sorrow; become covered with sins and wash them off; stick to folly and acquire wisdom. They know nothing of the essence of liberation. For Guru Angad, the main obstacle in the path to liberation is *haumai*, or ego, that induces individuals to remain self-centred. They think of themselves when they engage in action; they are born again and again. *Haumai* keeps human beings bound to deeds and to the chain of transmigration. However, it is a disease for which there is a remedy : through God's grace one can turn to the Guru's *shabad* and live in accordance with it. The true *sevak* of God is he who lodges God in his heart, offering his body and mind to Him by destroying *haumai* by the *shabad*. Real detachment comes from

reflection on the *shabad*; knowledge of the inner essence destroys *haumai*. He who ascribes things to himself through *haumai* cannot attain detachment. Guru Amar Das puts it very clearly : there is opposition between *haumai* and the Name; the two cannot exist in the same place; a service done in *haumai* is only a misapplication of the mind; only if the mind is subdued by the Name of God can one appropriate the Guru's *shabad*; if one lives in accordance with *hukam*, one meets God, and *haumai* disappears; one is reborn due to *haumai* and dies again; *haumai* is a darkness that does not allow one to see; no *bhagti* is possible in *haumai* and one cannot recognize *hukam*; the soul remains chained to bodies due to *haumai* and the Name cannot be lodged in the mind; by meeting the true Guru, *haumai* disappears and truth is lodged in the mind; in the service of the True One then one acts in accordance with truth and lives in accordance with truth.

Guru Nanak says that the *khaṇḍ*s, *brahmanḍ*s and *loks* created by God are true. However, the created universe is nothing in comparison with the eternal God. On close scrutiny, therefore, the world becomes a 'palace of smoke'. Ultimately, it vanishes. This world is not one's *des*; the real *des* is God. The realization of this truth makes the mind a stranger (*pardesī*) for whom the world becomes an alien territory. Human beings, ordinarily, are indifferent to the real purpose of life. They waste the day in eating and the night in sleep; the precious diamond of human birth is sold for a cowrie. They remain attached to *māyā* and suffer in the fire of thirst. Guru Ram Das talks of Bhūpats and Rāṇās who indulge in pleasures for a few days; *māyā* is like the (*sūbhā*) colour of *kasumbh* that fades in a moment; it does not go with them after death; what they carry with them are sins. The opportunity once lost does not come again. Guru Arjan says that human birth is the rare opportunity for meeting God. It should not be wasted in pursuit of *māyā*.

The relationship between God and human beings is one

of love (*prem*). Guru Nanak compares the love for God with that of the lotus with water, which though thrashed by waves does not discard love and cannot live without water; like that of the fish in water, which feels happy with its increase and cannot live without it; like that of the *chātrik* for rain, which waits for a single drop while rain is falling everywhere; like that of water with milk, which loses itself in milk; like that of *chakvī* with the sun, which does not have a wink of sleep. Guru Arjan compares the love of God with that of the infant for the mother's milk, like that of a poor man for wealth, like that of thirsty person for water, like the blindman for eyesight, and like the wife who yearns for her spouse. Guru Arjan uses the images of the fish, the deer, the black bee, and the *chātrik* to suggest the intensity of love to the point of sacrificing life. He also refers to the silken cloth of love given by the all seeing and all knowing God to protect his honour.

Loving devotion to God is *bhagti*. But it is not divorced from *bhau* or *bhai* which literally means fear but actually refers to awe due to the realization of the power and grace of God. He cannot be taken for granted but one can hope for His kindness and compassion. Love and awe in combination bring in other dimensions. *Bhagti* is not possible without the true Guru whose *bāṇī* is true and whose *shabad* is the means of union. The devotees of God accept His *bhāṇā*. They discard *māyā* and *haumai* and live in accordance with God's *bhāṇā*. By joining the *sādh-saṅgat* and appropriating the *shabad* one is redeemed. This happens due to God's grace. There is only one bestower of gifts and He is found through the Guru's grace. The young man is advised to have the Guru's instruction and to adopt God's *bhagti*; he should recite the Name and induce others to recite the Name. He should listen to the *bāṇī*, recite the *bāṇī* and live in accordance with it. The way of *bhagti* is hard; it is found only through the Guru, and through God's grace. It

transforms men into gods. By being absorbed in the True God one acquires his attributes.

The Sikh *bhagti* is different from Vaishnava *bhagti* and the *bhagti* of the *saints*. The lamp has to be lighted without oil, with the wick of awe. *Bhagti* is made possible by accepting the Guru's *bhāṇā* and adopting the service of the True Guru. *Bhagti* is made possible by *shabad-bāṇī*, God's grace, the Guru's *shabad* and *saṅgat*. It is through God's grace that one joins the *sādh-saṅg* and appropriates the Name. He who accepts God's *hukam* acts in accordance with His pleasure. The Name is the blindman's stick that guides him on the way. It is quite clear that Sikh *bhagti* is inseparably linked with the beliefs and practices of the Sikh tradition.

God is the only object of loving devotion. He means everything to the devotee. Guru Arjan says that God is his companion, his friend. He is the object of love. God is his honour and his ornament. He cannot live without God for a moment. God indulges him with love and is his breath. God is his master. He is happy with the state in which God keeps him. He does what God bids him to do. Wherever he looks there is God. His tongue recites God's name without fear. God is his treasure and his storehouse. Absorbed in love he finds God his only support. God is the source of his fame and he remains absorbed in God. He depends on God's help and support all the time. He meditates on God within his body and mind. He has found God's secret from the Guru. He has recognized the Only One through the True Guru. God alone is his refuge.

God is to be remembered in all situations, being the bestower of life and breath. At the opening of *Srī Rāg*, Guru Nanak says that he should not forget the name of God amidst the pleasures of a bed inlaid with gems on a floor studded with rubies. He should not forget the name of God if he were to become a *siddh* with supranatural powers, and command over all the nine treasures, to conceal himself at will to

impress people and to win their trust in him. He would not forget the name of God, if he were to become a *sultān*, gather armies and place his foot on the throne; all his power would be meaningless if he were to forget God.

God should be praised in all situations. Guru Nanak says that if all the streams become cows, all mountains become milk and butter, the whole earth becomes sugar for him to relish, and mountains of gold and silver are studded with diamonds and rubies (to be at his disposal), he would still sing the praises of God in endless joy. If all the vegetation were to turn into fruit of the finest sweetest taste, and the sun and the moon were to move round his stable place, he would still sing the praises of God in endless joy. If his body was afflicted with a painful disease, he was haunted by Rāhū and Ketū, and blood-sucking *Rājas* were placed over him to rule, even then he would sing the praises of God in endless joy. In *Rāg Sorathī* Guru Nanak says that God alone should be the object of praise, and no other entity. Only they praise God who are dyed in the *shabad*; through the pleasure of their *saṅgat*, one may come to know the essence. *Sachb* is the document of honour with the signature of *nām*; it is written by recognizing *bukam*; only the True One has the true power, and *bukam* cannot be recognized without the Guru. On the whole, thus, whereas remembrance may be personal, worship can be congregational. *Nām-simran* and *kīrtan* are two of the essential features of *bhagti*.

The phrase *chirī vichbhunne* is used by Guru Nanak and his successors not merely for persons who remain separated for a long time but also for the beginning of the cycle of death and rebirth. Therefore, the awareness of separation becomes commendable. Guru Angad says that the human frame without *birbā* is a corpse fit only to be burnt. Guru Amar Das emphasizes that *birbā* is commendable only in relation to the love for God. The symbol of the wife yearning for her spouse becomes appropriate for this purpose.

God, the Guru, the *shabad* and the Name are within

human beings as well as in the cosmos. Therefore, recognition of the self is recognition of God. Guru Amar Das says that the soul is the receptacle of God's light: to realize this is to recognize God's presence within oneself. This realization comes through the Guru's instruction. One experiences peace and joy through the Guru's grace. Guru Nanak says that one hears the unstruck music within on experiencing the *suñn-marīdal* within; the True Guru shows the unseeable primal being who has no limits; the *bairāgīs* absorbed in the Name enjoy bliss of the unstruck music.

Guru Nanak lays great emphasis on action (*karnī*), the real test of perfect understanding. The world is the stage where merit is earned through altruistic action (*sev*). The familiar proverb 'you reap as you sow' occurs frequently in *Gurbāñī*. As Guru Angad says, the good and bad deeds are watched and one comes close to or remains distant from God in accordance with one's deeds. God is essentially just in this regard. Through His grace He creates the inclination towards good deeds. Realization of truth is above everything but the matter does not end there. Above the realization of truth is truthful living. To help others is to serve God. At personal level, *rāj-jog* is detachment-in-attachment; at social level it is selfless action. This is the true meaning of *sachiār* of the *Japu*. The criterion of good action is 'what pleases God'. They are the king of kings who live in accordance with God's *razā*. *Parupkār* is God's attribute; it is a part of His *razā*.

## 2. The Sikh

The image of the ideal Sikh in *Gurbāñī* has a direct bearing on the conception of liberation-in-life. The term 'Sikh' occurs in the compositions of Guru Nanak both as the instruction of the Guru and the person who has imbibed the Guru's instruction. Sometimes reference is made to Sikhs without using the term Sikh. For example, Guru Nanak says that people should turn to the Guru who talks of *sachch* and



*shabad*; they who turn to the Guru are *Har ke log*. These rare persons who are put into the divine treasury like good coins are virtually the Sikhs of the Guru : they rise above the differences of caste; immersed in the Name they are pure *tīrath*; they are devoid of *haumai*, they love God by turning to the Guru. Similarly, the *sevak*s of the Guru who are dear to the True Guru are the followers of Guru Nanak. The Guru shows the right path to 'the Sikh' who strays from it. The instruction of the Guru is precious like jewels and pearls; the Sikh who serves the Guru finds such a treasure. Guru Nanak addresses the Sikh explicitly as 'listen O' Sikh to what the Guru says'. The 'Guru' and the 'Sikh' go together. The Sikh of the Guru liberates himself and others as well.

Guru Angad contrasts the *manmukh* who remains chained to death and rebirth in accordance with divine justice with the *Gurmukh* who performs meritorious deeds and recognizes the only God by His grace. The *Gurmukh* recognizes *bukam* through the light shown by God. By turning to the Guru he can see the moral depravity as a feature of the Kaliyuga. There is hardly any doubt that Guru Angad uses the term *Gurmukh* for the Sikh of the Guru.

Guru Amar Das uses several terms for those who follow the Guru's instruction, like *sādh*, *sañt*, *bhagat* and *hairāgi*. In a general way they are referred to as God's servants (*Har ke chākar*) or God's men (*Har-jañ*). They concentrate their minds on the feet of the Guru, and reflect on the Guru's *shabad* and aspire to attain the truth. They who serve God are *Har ke log*. Yet another term used for the Guru's disciple is *sevak*. The *sevak* serves only God through the *shabad*. Through the Guru's grace he becomes pure and subdues the self. Day and night he sings the praises of the True One, adorned by the *shabad* of the Guru. He alone can be called *sevak* who is prepared to give his head. The term 'Sikh' is also used for the one who lives in accordance with the Guru's will. The Guru enables the Sikh to mingle with the divine light. The term *Gursikh* makes its appearance in the *bāñi*

of Guru Amar Das. He talks of the riddle (*mundāvaṇī*) of three things in the platter which, if eaten, lead to liberation. This rare food is found only through reflection on the Guru. Thus, the riddle is solved by the Gursikh.

The term used most frequently for the Sikh by Guru Amar Das is *Gurmukh*. More than 350 lines of his *bāṇī* open with *Gurmukh*. The term is used not only in the sense of 'by turning to the Guru' but also for the person who has turned to the Guru. The *Gurmukh* remains absorbed in the *shabad* day and night. He subdues the self. He meditates on the Name. He gets rid of his *haumai*. Adorning himself with awe (*bhai*) and loving devotion (*bhagṭī*), the *Gurmukh* is comparable to *sadā-subāgan*, a woman who never loses her husband. The *Gurmukhs* live by the *shabad* of the Guru and look beautiful at the door of God. Absorbed in the truth, the *Gurmukh* dies while still alive. Dedicated to the divine Name, the *Gurmukh* recognizes his real self. He accepts God's will. He gains the real wealth by reflecting on the *shabad* of the Guru. In *Rāg Mārū*, Guru Amar Das dwells on the *Gurmukh* in fifty consecutive lines.

Guru Amar Das's conception of *bhagṭī* clarifies that his *bhagat* is the Sikh. One should perform *bhagṭī* in love and awe, and feel the presence of God all the time. Adornment with love and awe is commendable for following the right path. God should be remembered, and *bhagṭī* should be performed in love and awe. Two *shaloks* of Guru Amar Das underscore the importance of awe (*bhai*). *Bhagṭī* is found by turning to the Guru and one can die in life. *Bhagṭī* does not spring without awe and the mind does not become pure. Adorned with awe and *bhagṭī* one may attain the state of a *subāgan* by turning to the Guru. *Bhagṭī* becomes possible by turning to the Guru and through *bhagṭī* one dies in order to live. True *bhagṭī* transforms men into gods. *Bhagṭī* cannot be performed without awe; love and awe inculcated by the *shabad* lead to *bhagṭī*. One may perform *bhagṭī* and obtain eternal peace through God's grace. On the whole, *bhagṭī* in

the *bāṇī* of Guru Amar Das is associated with awe in acknowledgement of the omnipotence of the one Lord alone. What is more important, the way of *bhagti* is found from the Guru and through the Guru's *shabad*. The Name is the only source of status and honour (*jāt, patt*) for the *bhagats*; they are adorned with the Name. 'My true Lord is the destroyer of demons; the *bhagats* are saved through the *shabad* of the Guru'. Singing the praises of God in accordance with *Gurmat*, the *bhagats* look beautiful. The *bhagats* are happy, being dyed in the true *shabad*. They meditate on the Name. One may be called *bhagat* by everyone but bhakti is not found without serving the True Guru.

Guru Amar Das refers to the path and the goal for the Sikh of the Guru. The mind is conquered through the *shabad* of the Guru. *Haumai* is eradicated by recognizing the *shabad*. One prays for being able to sing the praises of God who is the bestower of the body and the mind. The great warrior is he who destroys the inner enemy in the form of *hankār*. The detached devotee meditates on the Name. To remain pure amidst the impurities of the world is the objective so that one's light mingles with the divine Light. One becomes liberated by serving the liberated one. By lodging God in the heart through the instruction of the Guru, one becomes indifferent to joy and sorrow. The awe of the True Guru removes all illusion and fear, and one recognizes the *shabad* through God's grace. The servants of God concentrate on the feet of the Guru. The Guru's *darshan* leads to the state of liberation. The devotee takes refuge in the True Guru and dedicates his body and mind to him; he gives up his caste. He bathes in the pool of nectar that is within him. By recognizing the divine *hukam*, one does not entertain any hopes for oneself. One should be ready to give one's head. The service of the Guru is a labour of love; one serves in awe. The servant of God attains liberation and enables others to attain liberation through the divine Name

and the Guru's *shabad*. The cup of the love of the Master is drunk through God's grace. They who conquer their mind, conquer the world. The one who lodges God in the heart by turning to the Guru always enjoys the season of regeneration.

The Sikh of the Guru (Gursikh) has a distinct identity in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. We are familiar with the hymn which refers to the daily routine of the Sikh :

The Sikh of the True Guru must rise at dawn and meditate on the Name. At dawn he must rise and cleanse himself in the Name of God, bathing in the pool of nectar. As by the Guru instructed he should then repeat the Name. All his sins, all his evil and foul doings, shall be washed. With the rise of the day he must chant the Guru's *shabad*. He should meditate on the Name in all situation.

This is only one of the numerous references to Gursikh in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. The Sikhs of the Guru have love of God in their hearts; they come to the Guru for worship and take away the Name as their profit; they listen to the instruction of the Guru and their *haumai* and *dubidhā* are eradicated; their faces are radiant with love. Praise be to the Sikhs who fall at the feet of the Guru, recite the Name of God, listen to the Name of God, appropriate the Name by serving the Guru, and live in accordance with the Guru's *bhāṇā*. The Sikh of the Guru propagates his instruction and there is no difference between them any longer : 'The Guru is Sikh and the Sikh is Guru'. Through his instruction, the Guru assimilates the Sikh with himself; some remain in his presence to serve him, while others are sent away to perform his tasks. This comes very close to saying that Guru Ram Das appointed his representatives to look after Sikh *saṅgats* at places away from Ramdaspur.

In a stanza of the *Vār* in *Rāg Sorathī*, the *bhagat*, *saṅt*, *sādh*, *Gurmukh*, and Gursikh are mentioned together. They refer to one and the same entity : the Sikhs of the Guru. In *Rāg Dhanāsrī*, the *saṅts* and *bhagats* refer to the Sikhs. Guru

Ram Das prays that the sins of all those who serve God may be washed and they be kept in the *saṅgat* dear to God. The *saṅt-jan* meditate on God and their suffering, illusion, and fear disappear through the instruction of the Guru (*Gurmat*). In *Rāg Rāmkalī*, a number of terms are used for the Sikhs: *Har ke log*, *Har-jan*, *Har Rām-jan*, *Rām-jan*, *saṅt*, *saṅt-jan*, *sādh*, *sevak*, and *Gurmukh*. Association with them turns the crow into a swan. The men of God (*Har-jan*) meditate on the Name; *Har* and *Har-jan* become one. They who find God sweet are eminent among men; they are the supreme men of God; greatness and peace come through the Name of God, and this juice is tasted through the *shabad* of the Guru. It is clear that Guru Ram Das refers to the Sikhs when he talks of *saṅts*, *bhagats*, and *sādhs*. The Guru himself is referred to as *sādhū* or *saṅt*.

Guru Arjan poses a number of questions and gives answers which talk of *Gurmukh*, one who has turned to the Guru. He finds the way to liberation and gets liberated. He acquires knowledge and is good to others. He eradicates *haumai*. He performs good deeds and remains unattached. He remains in peace, in contrast with the *mānmukh* who remains in suffering. The *Gurmukh* regards *sukh* and *dukh* as the same. He meditates on God and sings God's praises. The whole world is in fear but not the *brahm-giānī*: he is redeemed. There is no difference between *Rām* and the *Saṅt*. Once the malady of *haumai* is successfully treated, one attains *rāj-jog* through the Guru's grace.

The Sikh of the Guru is protected by God and redeemed through His grace. The dust of the *Sādh*'s feet is more efficacious than pilgrimage to all the sixty-eight sacred places. The Sikh *sevaks* have the treasure of the Name. Devoid of all fear, they are dyed in the hue of the Master. Their association is cherished by the Guru. God's devotees remain steadfast. They are indifferent to joy and sorrow. The Guru himself is their protector. Death does not touch the Sikh of the Guru. The *sevak* of the Guru performs perfect service.

Guru Arjan tells the *sants* at one place that the *shabad* is the support of life. By worshipping the one God their countenance becomes bright and they remain stable. The True Guru brings all affairs to a good end. All thirst is quenched. After great search the treasure of the Name is found, it is priceless. God is their friend, wealth and youth, their father and mother. By turning to the Guru, they escape the deadly whirlpool. The *sants* take refuge with God to be liberated. The haughty suffer destruction. The gift of the Name is found in the *Sādhū's saṅgat*. There is no high or low : God's light is in all.

The Sikhs have come together like swans on a pool in accordance with God's *bukam*. They feed on pearls and gems in the pool, and God's will is that they should never part from it. God is under the control of *bhagats* and he is their strength. The Gursikhs are instructed to meditate on God and to taste the nectar of *bānī* with its nectar of the Name. In contrast with *monīs*, *tapsīs*, *brahmachārīs*, *sanyāsīs* and others, the *sants* of God are free from joy and sorrow, greed and attachment. The dust of their feet is cherished. By meeting the True Guru all their anxiety is gone.

The *Gurmukh* is dear to God, and none can injure the one guarded by God. He enjoys eternal bliss as a special robe (*sirpāo*). The *sevak* of the Guru never goes to hell; he meditates on God; in *sādh-saṅg* he receives life every day from the Guru. He listens to *kīrtan* at the Guru's door (*gurdwāra*). The *manmukh*, in contrast with the *Gurmukh*, remains chained to the wheel of death and rebirth and goes through all hells.

### 3. Congregational Worship

For the Sikhs of the Guru, worship in congregation is more important than anything else. The place where the *sādh*s sit is beautiful. *Bhagti*, love, and the state of liberation are found through association with the *sādh*s. Contrary to the general

impression Guru Nanak refers to the Sikh congregation. The terms used are *sañt-sabbā*, *sañgat*, *sat-sañgat*, *sikh-sabbā*, *gur-sañgat*, *sādh-sabbā*, and *sachchī sañgat*. This *sañgat* is associated with the Guru, the *shabad* and the Name. The *sādh* and *sañt* appear to be equated with *sevak* and *sikh*. Thus, the reference clearly is to the Sikh congregation in which the Guru is present. Guru Angad refers to congregational worship without using any term for it. Guru Amar Das, refers to congregational worship as *sādh-sañgat*, *sat-sañgat*, *sachchī sañgat*, *sachch sañgat*, *sañt-sañgat* or *Gur-sabbā*. The last, *Gur-sabbā*, associates congregational worship clearly with the Guru. The terms *sādh* and *sañt* are used for what is now commonly called Sikh. The most frequently used term is *sat-sañgat* which emphasizes the character of the congregation as seen by the Guru. As the 'true association' it stood distinguished from others. Indeed, there can be no *sañgat* without the True Guru, just as there is no liberation without the *shabad*.

The importance of the *sañgat* is linked up with its character. The one who is perfectly fortunate attains to *bairāg* through *sādh-sañgat*. The one who reflects on the *shabad* of the Guru, begins to feel the awe of God. They come to the *sat-sañgat* and sing the praises of God. By lodging God in their hearts they get rid of duality (*dubidhā*). They love the True One, their mind is true, and their *bāñi* is true. By serving the True Guru the mind is shorn of all impurities and the body becomes pure. By meeting the profound Guru one attains to peace and happiness. By sitting in the true *sañgat*, one appropriates the true Name and the mind is stilled. Psychological rather than physical presence with the Guru is important for realizing the True Guru. The place where the praises of God are sung in *sat-sañgat* is beautiful and it is dear to God. They who are immersed in truth turn to true devotion; to their great good fortune they appropriate the Name; they realize God through the true *shabad* sung

in the *sat-saṅgat* in the praise of God. All awareness comes by joining the *sat-saṅgat*; devotion to God is expressed through the *shabad* of the Guru; accepting the will of God one attains peace, being absorbed in the truth.

The centrality of congregational worship in the Sikh way of life becomes evident from what Guru Amār Das says about the true association. The one whom God dyes in His colour meets the *sat-saṅgat*. True association springs from the True Guru and it leads to inclination towards the truth. All those who remain alien to this *saṅgat* live at the level of brutes. To forget the creator and remain without the Name is to be a thief. In the House of the Guru there is the treasure of the Name and its storehouse is filled with *bhagṭī*. The True Guru is the bestower of life. Day and night there is *kīrtan* through the medium of the Guru's *shabad*. The *shabad* of the Guru has been spoken for all the cosmic ages. He who turns to the Guru reflects on the *shabad* of the Guru and gets rid of the disease. God Himself enables one to meet the *sat-saṅgat* and bestows greatness on the one who lodges the divine Name in the heart. The one who accepts the Guru's instruction never leaves the *sat-saṅgat* and appropriates the Name day and night. The one who turns to the Guru receives the *shabad* in the *sat-saṅgat*. Guru Amār Das prays to God, 'I will sit where you ask me to sit and I will go where you tell me to go. But, pray, keep me where I can sing of truth and attain to bliss'. This obviously refers to the *sat-saṅgat*. Every gain comes from the *sat-saṅgat*; the opportunity comes through God's grace.

*Gurbāṇī* is meant to be sung in congregation (*saṅgat*). There are references to the *saṅgat* of *saṁts* or *sādhs* but far more frequently the term used is *sat-saṅgat*, the true association of the Guru and his Sikhs. One listens to the *kathā* of God in the *saṅgat* and meditates on the ineffable God. The *bāṇī* is recited in the *saṅgat* and the praises of God are sung; this medicine (*aukhad*) removes all kinds of disease and suffering. Daily one listens to the *kathā* of the



Divine Name in the *saṅgat*; by singing the praises of God one swims across the ocean of life; one utters *Gurbāṇī* in the *saṅgat* and quaffs the nectar of *Har-kathā*. It is quite obvious that *saṅgat* meets in the *dharmśāl*. The Guru gives instruction in the *kathā* of God; one meditates on God in the *saṅgat* and meets God. The Guru utters *amrit-bāṇī* and his Sikhs love it; the True Guru gives instruction in the interest of others. The *saṅgat*, by implication, is the divine court. One joins the *saṅgat* through great good fortune and all one's affairs are set right by the Name. One meets other Sikhs in the *saṅgat* to sing the praises of God, and everyone yearns to see the Guru. They who have not taken refuge in the Guru's *saṅgat*, their life is desolate. Through great good fortune one joins the *saṅgat* and cultivates the love of God; one remains absorbed in God day and night and regards joy and sorrow alike; the love of God is cultivated in the *saṅgat* through great good fortune. The treasure of the Name is in the *saṅgat* where one meets God; through the Guru's grace one's innerself is lighted and all darkness disappears; iron is transmuted into gold by the touch of the True Guru. Only in the *saṅgat* does one find the wealth of the Name; it never diminishes, is never stolen, and never taxed. The true *saṅgat* of the Guru where one tastes the pleasure of God is dear to God. The *saṅgat* is the school (*chāṭśāl*) of the True Guru: one learns to appreciate the attributes of God in the *saṅgat*. In the *saṅgat* is God.

Guru Arjan speaks of association with *sādhs* and *sants*. The terms used for this association are *sādh-saṅg*, *sādh-saṅgat*, *saṁt-saṅg*, *saṁt-sabbhā*, *sat-saṅg* and *sat-saṅgat*. An activity of the *sādhs* and *sants* who meet is singing God's praises (*kīrtan*). It is held in *dharmśāl*. The Guru may also be present there. Thus, there is hardly any doubt that the *sādhs* and *sants* are Sikhs of the Guru and they come to the *dharmśāl* for congregational worship. The *dharmśāl* is the most important place for the religious life of the Sikhs.

In association with the *sādhs* is peace; in sensual

pleasures and rulership lies the fear (of death). The one True Lord is in the *sādh-saṅgat*. Associate every day with the *sādh*, concentrating your mind on the Guru's feet. Only through God's grace *sādh-saṅg* becomes possible. Association with *saints* enables one to recite the Name of God. *Sādh-saṅg* puts an end to birth and death. All kinds of comforts come from the true association (*sat-saṅg*). The divine Name is found in the *sant-sabbā* as the support of life. The teaching through which we sing the praises of God is perfect; *sādh-saṅg* is found through a great fortune. The one to whom God is gracious sings the praises of God in *sādh-saṅg*. Fear and illusion are removed by *sādh-saṅg*. The fire is quenched in the *sādh-saṅg*. The *sādh-saṅgat* removes the fear of birth and death. Nothing in the universe is eternal, neither Indrapuri nor Shivpuri, nor Brahmpuri. There is only one place which is true and stable, where there is *anand*, *sahaj*, *śīfat*, *bhagī* and *giān*. This is where the *sādhs* meet in association. This 'city without fear' (*anbhau nagar*) lasts for ever. There is no fear, no illusion, no sorrow and no anxiety. There is no death. It is the abode of bliss. The one to whom God is gracious attains liberation in this stable place, the *sādh-saṅg*.

The Name is found in *sādh-saṅg*, the association of *saints*. The place where the praises of God are sung everyday is found from the Guru : the praises of God are sung in *sādh-saṅg*. Singing of God's praises in *sādh-saṅgat* is preferable to all other places and all other forms of worship. *Sādh-saṅgat* is the redeemer of the world. The Name of God is the support of the mind of the *saints*. The lotus feet of the Guru are dear to the *saints* who worship God in love. The One whom millions of *munīs* seek, for whom millions perform austerities, rituals and prayers, and for whom millions wander all over the earth and bathe at sacred places is realized in *sādh-saṅgat* through God's grace. The true Guru has become kind to Sikhs and given them the love of *sant-saṅg*; their honour has been saved by God by nurturing them on the daily *kīrtan*.

I pray to God that he may make me the servant of his servants, that I may live by singing his praises even if I get the nine treasures and rulership, that there may be a large measure of the nectar of the Name in the home of your servants, that I may listen to your praises in their company, that I may serve them to purify my frame, that I may wave the fan over them, fetch water for them, grind corn for them and wash their feet; I cannot do all this on my own; be gracious to me, give me a place in the *dharmśāl* of the *saṁts*.

The *dharmśāl* is the place for *sādh-saṁg*, and the place of *sādh-saṁg* is the *dharmśāl*.

*Sādh-saṁgat* or *saṁt-saṁgat* is also the true association (*sat-saṁgat*). The path of liberation is hard to tread. It is like walking on the sharp edge of a double-edged sword. One has to discard pride, attachment and the question of 'mine or yours'. The ones who join the *saṁt-saṁgat* through God's grace cross the ocean of fear. Life eternal is in the *sādh-saṁg* where one drinks the nectar of God. *Kathā* and *kīrtan* through the *bāṇī* of the perfect Guru in the *sādh-saṁg* become the source of peace. They who join *sādh-saṁgat* are shorn of *durmat*; they lodge God in the heart and the dust of their feet is sought by others. Darkness vanishes by joining the *sādh-saṁgat* and one attains liberation. By joining the *sādh-saṁgat* one dies to self and obtains real life. Peace here and bright countenance in the hereafter is the result of association with *saṁts*. Through the Guru's grace is recited the Name to find Being who is the life of the universe. *Nām*, *dān* and *isnān* are associated with *sādh-saṁg*. Death does not touch those who sing *kīrtan* in *sādh-saṁg*. There is one God and one way of worship: *kīrtan* in the *sādh-saṁgat*. *Sādh-saṁg* is raised by God on an everlasting foundation so as to redeem all those who join it.

Sometimes the term *sādh-saṁgat* is not used but the reference is clearly to this institution. 'I see the Guru with my eyes and place my forehead on his feet. I go to the Guru

on foot and use my hands for waving the fan. Day and night I recite the Name of *Akāl Purkh*. I have discarded all other means and placed my trust in the Guru. He has bestowed the treasure of the Name on me, and all suffering is gone'. The treasure of the Name is inexhaustible: Practised here is *nām*, *dān* and *isnān*, and Guru's *kathā* is performed here. In the state of peace there is no fear of death. The Sikhs in the *sat-saṅgat* gain great importance. The dust of their feet rubbed on the forehead brings a merit equal to that of bathing at all the sacred places. The deep hue acquired through the dye of God is so fast that it never fades. Illusion and fear are destroyed by *sādh-saṅg* and one attains *brahm-giān*. True association is the source of liberation.

#### 4. *Ardās*

As essential feature of the Sikh way is prayer (*ardās*). The term *ardās* occurs frequently in the *bāṇī* of Guru Nanak. Though not always, it is often used for prayer. 'You O'Lord God are the sole doer. Keep me as You wish. May I have the gift of the Name as my sole occupation'. 'This is my *ardās* before God that I may live in the *saṅgat* of *sādhū-jan* and the light of the Name may dawn and wash all my sins'. One should address one's prayers to the true Lord who alone is the dispenser of peace or suffering. Pray to the True Guru that he may enable you to meet the Friend. 'Nanak prays for the true Name that leads to liberation'. The *dhādhī* prays to God for the true Name which leads to contentment. Guru Angad makes it clear that the only way to approach God is through supplication (*ardās*). Stand before God with hands folded for *ardās*.

Guru Amar Das prays to the True Lord, the eternal protector, that he may live without any anxiety. He prays to God who alone is the bestower of gifts. He prays to the Perfect Guru for protecting his honour and giving him greatness (of the Name). The *sevak* serves God and prays

to Him that He may enable the *sevak* to meet Him. Guru Ram Das prays to God that He may enable those who are engrossed in the poisonous *māyā* to cross the ocean (of transmigration). He prays to God that he may be associated with those who praise God through the Name. All belong to God and He is the capital of everyone; all pray to Him for every boon; He fulfils the wishes of those who are close to Him; there is no one else to whom they can pray. The *dhādhī* prays to God that he may meditate on the Name. 'You are kind to those who take refuge with you, O'Lord. Make me a servant of your devotees'.

References to *ardās* are more frequent in the compositions of Guru Arjan than in the compositions of his predecessors. At one place he says, 'I want no *rāj* and no *mukṭi*; my mind is concentrated on the lotus feet of the Lord'. Guru Arjan prays for peace by becoming dust of the feet of the *saṁts*. The *sevak* asks for the service of the Guru. One should pray for association with *sādh-saṁgat*. One should pray to the true Guru who bestows the gift of the treasure of the Name for union with God. 'Give this *dān* to your servant that he may never forget the Name'. Our *ardās* before the Lord Master is that He may slake our thirst for *māyā*. 'May God hear my *ardās* and give me the gift of the Name through the grace of the *Sanit* (Guru)'.

Prayer can be made only to God who is the giver of the body and the soul. 'Listen to the prayer of Nanak : lodge the Name in his heart'. 'With hands folded I pray that I may meditate on my Master'. 'With hands folded I pray to the Merciful one, the Lord of all, that I may instantly attain to liberation'. If you wish for a real life, pray to the Guru; discard your own wisdom and dedicate your mind and body to him. 'Save us O'Lord, we cannot do anything on our own, bestow the Name on us through your grace'. 'With hands folded I pray that I may wash the feet of the *saṁts*; the merciful everpresent Lord may enable me to live by the dust of their feet'. 'Nanak asks for the gift of the Name through God's grace'.

Those who pray to God face no hindrance; sorrow goes away and peace comes in, and all the three fevers (of the body, the mind and illusion) disappear. With hands folded one prays for the gift of *bhagti* and meditation on God all the time. 'Nanak's only prayer is that he should never forget God'. With hands folded, he asks for the gift that he may become a servant of his servants. With hands folded, he asks for the gift that God may keep him close. With hands folded, he prays to the Master that He may purify him by the dust of the feet of *sādhis*, that all evil thoughts may vanish by meditating on God and the dirt of many births may be washed.

The gift for which one may pray to the powerful Lord is service of the *saṁts*. One should pray to God earnestly that one may remember Him every moment and that through His grace the destroyer of the suffering of the helpless may lead to liberation. Guru Arjan's prayer to God is that he may be given the service of the *saṁts*. 'Through your grace O'my beloved God give us loving devotion (*bhagti*) and the Name. What can the helpless pray for'? God is within everyone. Thirst for God is in the mind. The servant of God says 'I am yours'. 'Be gracious O'my divine Master so that I may attain liberation by serving the people. With hands folded I pray that I may meditate on God all the time; every morning I may sing His *bāṇī*, and recite His name throughout the day. The Lord is in every place, in everything and outside everything; may He help me wherever I go'.

Many a time the prayer is for liberation. Guru Arjan attaches crucial importance to the ideal of liberation. One term used for the liberated person is *brahm-giānī*. Another is *muktā*. The state of liberation is *nihchal rāj* or *nihchal āsan*. The state of *muktī* is not subject to change. Somewhere on the path to liberation one has to die-in-life. It is a state of unison or union with God. It is a state in which one remains detached in action (*rāj-jog*). As we noticed earlier, indispensable for liberation is the Name. It is possible to

become liberated in one's life (*jīvan-muktā*). It is an everlasting state (*amrāpad*). It is through the Guru's grace that one becomes a *muktā*. This state is called *pad-nirbān*. It is a state of fearlessness (*nirbhau pad*). This is the highest of state open to a human being : it is *parm-pad*. By taking refuge in God one may receive the gift of fearlessness (*abbai dān*). One may become liberated-in-life by meditating on God in loving devotion. One becomes a *muktā* in the world through the instruction of the Guru (*gur-updes*). In a state of liberation one is devoid of *haumai*, affection and attachment. As long as *durmat* lasts there is no scope of attaining *parm-pad*. In order to recognize God one has to die-in-life. One can die-in-life and cross the ocean of fear through God's grace. *Parm-pad* is found at the feet of the *saṁts* and in the service of the Guru. By serving the *sādhs* one may receive *abbai-dān*. The life of the liberated being alone is real life (*jīvan-pad*). The state of liberation is mingling of light with the Light. Association with *sādhs* can be a means of liberation. He who has the Name in his heart becomes liberated-in-life. One may attain liberation while laughing and playing, dressing and eating. In other words, one can become liberated-in-life with all one's commitments.

## 5. Liberation-in-Life

In the *Siddh Gost*, Guru Nanak uses several inter-related terms which refer to the state of liberation. One of these is *mukt*, the person who attains liberation (*mukṭi*). Another is *jīvat-marai* or becoming dead while still living. Another phrase *mar-jīvai* or living after dying. This refers to the state of the liberated-in-life (*jīvan-mukt*). Another phrase used for this state is *āsā māhi nirās*, a state of detachment. Elsewhere the same sense is conveyed by the phrase '*aṁjan māhi niraṁjan*', remaining pure amidst impurity. The state of liberation is also called *pad-nirbān* or *nirbān-pad*, the state of detachment. The state is everlasting (*amrāpad*). It is also

called the fourth step or state with reference to a state that is beyond the three qualities of *māyā*. Yet another term used is *turiāvasthā*. There is no *haumai* in the state of liberation-in-life, and there is no fear. The state of liberation is *anbhau-pad* (the state of fearlessness). Guru Angad defines *jīvat-marnā* as living in accordance with *hukam* to become one with God.

Like Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das emphasizes the need of dying-unto-self and attaining liberation-in-life. The phrases often used by Guru Amar Das are *jīvat marai*, *shabad marai*, *Gur ke shabad jīvat marai*, *āp chhōḍe jīvat marai*, *jīvan marna*, *mar mar jīvai*, *jīvat marai marai phun jīvai*, *sabad maro phir jīvo sad hī tā phir marn na hoe*, *mue tin na akhīai je Gur ke sabad samāe*, *mar jīviā* and *jīvatiā mar rahie*. Eradication of *haumai* by recognizing God's *hukam* and accepting his will is the basic idea of dying unto self. The devotee who dies unto himself has no desires and aspirations of his own. He is detached completely from the world; he lives in the world not for himself so much as for others. The terms frequently used for this state by Guru Amar Das are *ghar hī māhi udās*, *greh kutumb maih sadā udās*, *bikhiā māhi udās* and *vichai greh udās*. The basic idea is that the Sikh of the Guru experiences liberation-in-life as a state of bliss but he does not remain inert or inactive; he performs his social duties in a spirit of selfless detachment for the welfare of others. He approximates to the divinity, he worships and conducts his life in accordance with God's will. Clearly, Guru Amar Das's conception of liberation is the same as that of Guru Nanak and it is different from that of the known Indian traditions in which it is equated with inert bliss whether in life or after death.

According to Guru Ram Das, the *shabad* of the Guru is the antidote to the poison of *haumai* and *māyā*. By dying to self, one lives to quaff the nectar of love, and through the Guru's grace attains liberation-in-life (*jīvan mukt*). For this objective, one should be ready to offer one's head to



the True Guru. To live in accordance with the Guru's *bhāṇā* is to die while living; by dying-in-life one crosses the ocean of life and through the Guru's grace is absorbed in the Name. The prayer of Guru Ram Das, therefore, is : 'keep me as you wish'. The antidote to *māyā* is not renunciation but renunciation-in-the-home (*vichche greh udās*). Another word for it is *alīpt* (detached). An alternative phrase for the ideal is *vich āsā hoi nirāsi*. The life of a householder is better than that of an ascetic who begs from door to door.

Guru Arjan tells people to 'accept death first, discard all hope of life, and become the dust of the feet of others before you come to us'. The beginning of the journey is the complete negation of self. The end of the journey is liberation, a state of bliss. The liberated-in-life remains active as in *rāj-jog*. He attains to the state of fearlessness (*nirbhai-pad*). When the *sevak* and the Master become one, the *sevak* acquires the attributes of God. The Master is *nirbhai*. Therefore the liberated-in-life also becomes fearless. God is the giver (*dātā*) of the state of fearlessness (*anbhai*). They who are acceptable to the Guru remain detached amidst worldly activities.

Marriage was the most important event in the life of householders. The ceremony of marriage, therefore, became increasingly important. The compositions like the *ghoṛīāṇī* can be appreciated in this context. The caparisoned mare, the saddle and the whip, the songs sung for the bridegroom, the marriage party, and the bride serve as metaphors or similes for the human birth, *shabad* of the Guru, the Name, *Gur-giān*, loving devotion, and meeting with God. The marriage symbolizes union with God : it brings in the bridegroom, the marriage party, the bride and her friends, the natal home and the marital home, the rite of marriage, and the dowry. The ceremony of betrothal is followed by the *pādhā* opening his *patrī* to look for the auspicious time (*lagan, mahūrat*), the marriage party coming home, and the performance of the wedding rite in which the bride and the

bridegroom take rounds. After this comes the composition known as *lāvān* which is now used for the Sikh wedding ceremony called *Anand*, because the *Anand* of Guru Amar Das was recited as a part of the ceremony. The *Alāharian* of Guru Nanak were meant to be sung in place of the traditional dirge.

The activity of the liberated-in-life is not in self-interest alone. He performs services for the Guru and his followers, and for the other people. 'My Master is *par-upkārī*', says Guru Arjan. Like God, the Gurus are *par-upkārī*. Guru Arjan says that the *par-upkārī jan* gives the gift of *bhagī* and unites people with God. This refers to the Gurus and their followers. Thus, *par-upkār* is a concern of the liberated-in-life as much as of the Gurus and God. From God, through the Guru, the liberated-in-life becomes a part of the larger dispensation called *nām-dharm*, the lamp lighted in darkness for the redemption of mankind in the Kaliyuga.

The five *khaṇḍ*s in the *Japujī* of Guru Nanak have a close bearing on liberation. These verses are generally seen as depicting spiritual ascent in five stages. It is equally important to see that these five states are not mutually exclusive. The last state does not imply that the first is made redundant. The first is the *dharm khaṇḍ*. The earth itself is the place where human beings can earn merit. In the true court of the true Lord, all actions are taken into account and only they receive honour who have good deeds to their credit. The distinction between the ripe and the unripe is established there. In the *giān khaṇḍ*, the awareness of God's vast creation becomes dominant and sympathies are widened. In the *saram khaṇḍ* the emphasis is on hard work, not merely for oneself but also for others. In the *karam khaṇḍ*, the presence of the divine within oneself to the exclusion of everything else is the source of power. In the *sachch khaṇḍ* God watches over all his creation with grace. It is a state of union in which the individual becomes aware of the universal operation of *bukam* and acts in accordance

with it. The *shabad* is minted in the true mint of restraint, patience, consciousness, knowledge, awe, hard work, and love as the result of God's grace. Good conduct, wider awareness, service of others, and strong commitment become the essential features of the life of the individual who has experienced the state of bliss. He becomes a part of the divine purpose of universal redemption.

## 6. The *Bāṇī* of Guru Tegh Bahadur

In Guru Tegh Bahadur's *bāṇī*, composed in a critical situation, concern for liberation forms a dominant theme. The terms used for the state of liberation in his *shabads* are significant in themselves: *pad nirbāṇ*, *muktī*, meeting (*milan*), cutting the noose of death, the mingling of water with water, self-recognition, recognition of God, *jīvan-muktī*, *abbai-dān* and *nirbbhai pad*, crossing the ocean of life, end of rebirth and death, absorption in *sukh*. Evidently, liberation puts an end to the cycle of rebirth and death, and it is a state of union with God. This state may be attained in life. It is a state of bliss and a state of fearlessness.

Under the sway of *kām*, *krodh* and *moh*, human beings forget God. The body which is false (subject to destruction) is regarded as true, like the dream. Whatever we see is bound to vanish, like the shadow of a cloud. In search of wealth due to greed, men wander in all directions, serve all sorts of men, and go from door to door, like dogs; they never turn to the praises of God. The whole creation is a mirage, even mother and father, brother, son, wife, and relations. The whole life is wasted under illusion. The comforts of *māyā* are like a dream and the wall of sand. Human beings waste their life in sticking to falsehood, ignoring the truth. The poison of *māyā* makes them mad. The customary dealings of life (*beohār*) become the objects of attachments. The mind remains entangled in *māyā*, and the tie is tightened more and more by acting in self-interest and the pleasures of the

senses. Men remain engrossed in gold and women. The other sources of attachment are power and riches. The world to which the mind is attached is a mountain of smoke. The whole world is like a dream.

Guru Tegh Bahadur asks human beings to discard pride and shun *kām*, *krodh* and association with evil men; to regard comfort and pain, honour and dishonour, as the same; to remain detached from joy and sorrow; neither to seek praise nor to bother about blame. This is the hard way to the state of liberation (*pad nirbān*). Human beings do not turn to the praises of God due to their preoccupation with *māyā*. Sons and friends, like *māyā* and *mamtā*, serve as a mirage. The Master who bestows the gift of liberation (*mukṭi*) is forgotten. Addressing the *sādhs* (Sikhs), Guru Tegh Bahadur says that it is difficult to comprehend the mind: it remains unstable due to thirst. The *krodh* within keeps it alien to the jewel of knowledge (*giān*). Everything is set right if God becomes kind. Guru Tegh Bahadur asks the Sikhs to sing the praises of God. They should not waste the rare opportunity offered by human birth. They should take refuge in God who redeems the sinner and helps the poor. They should discard pride and attachment to *māyā* and think of God. This is the path to liberation (*mukṭi paṁth*). They should turn to the Guru to receive this gift. Only he who is filled with God can be regarded as the liberated one (*mukṭā*).

Addressing the *sādhs* (Sikhs), Guru Tegh Bahadur says that peace lies in refuge with God. They should remember the name and abandon the service of *māyā* and *mamtā*. They should be indifferent to joy and sorrow, gold and copper. Praise and blame, pain and comfort do not count with the *giānī*. Such human beings should be regarded as liberated (*mukṭā*). Your body and your beautiful wife are not yours for ever. You have wasted your life without turning to God, without meditating on His feet. Only they are happy who sing God's praises. The men of the world engrossed

in *māyā* do not attain the state of fearlessness (*nirbhai pad*). Human birth is a rare opportunity for attaining liberation. One should take refuge with God who is gracious to the poor and who is the remover of all fear. One should appropriate His name which redeems the sinners. Love of worldly things is false. Even your wife and friends are attached to you due to self-interest. No one accompanies you in the end. Only by singing the praises of God you may cross the ocean of life. Having wandered in cosmic ages you take human birth. This is the only opportunity for meeting the Lord.

In innumerable births you did not attain the stable state (*asthir mat*). Now that you have taken human birth, turn to God for liberation. Turn to God's *bhagī*. This is the path of liberation (*muktī pañth*). Cultivate *giān*. You do not have to look for God in forests; he is within you. Engrossed in *māyā* and alien to *giān*, one does not realize that God lives within. All this ignorance departs by taking refuge with the *sādh* (Guru). By doing this, the noose of death is cut off. In a comprehensive statement, Guru Tegh Bahadur talks of liberation as absorption in God, like water in water. This is made possible by the Guru's grace (*kirpā*). God resides within those who get rid of *kām* and *krodh*. The liberated person does not feel pain in suffering. Comfort, love and fear do not count with him; gold and dust are the same to him. Blame and praise do not affect him; he is not touched by greed, attachment or pride. He remains indifferent to joy and sorrow, honour and dishonour. He remains detached from the world, discarding hope and desire. Guru Tegh Bahadur is not a renunciant. He does not search for God in a forest. The omnipresent God who remains detached is within everyone, like fragrance in a flower, like an image in the mirror. Search for him within. The Guru imparts the knowledge that one and the same God is outside and within. The illusion vanishes when God is recognized within oneself.

Addressing the *sādhs* (Sikhs), Guru Tegh Bahadur says

that the world is lost in illusion. Sold to *māyā*, human beings do not remember God, attached to mother and father, brother, son and wife, and intoxicated with youth, wealth and power, they do not turn to God who removes all sorrows and is kind to the poor. Only one in millions turns to the Guru to recognize God. The real *jogī* is not bothered about praise or blame; to him gold and iron are alike. He remains detached from joys and sorrows. Only such a person can become liberated. One may wander in ten directions in search of the means of liberation, stranger to the secret that God is within. Without taking refuge in God it is not possible to receive the gift of fearlessness (*abbai-dān*). Remember God day and night; the time is passing like water from a broken pitcher. Sing the praises of God. Do not forget that death is inevitable. Still there is time to sing God's praises. By reciting the name of God one may attain the state of fearlessness (*nirbbhai pad*). The name of God removes suffering. The world was surprised to see that the everlasting and stable state of fearlessness was bestowed upon Ajamal, Gaṇika, Narad and Dhruv. God, who is the protector of *bhagats*, is always close. Without the name of God one remains in suffering. The fear does not depart without *bhagti*. This secret is revealed by the Guru; Pilgrimage and fasting do not help; take refuge with God. Yoga and *yagya* are futile; take to the praises of God. Discard pride and attachment both, and sing the praises of God. This is the way to liberation in life. Pilgrimage and fasting do not help; control your mind. The *dharma* you follow is useless. Without *bhagti*, an individual is like a stone that does not get wet in water. By reciting the name of God one may attain to the state of liberation (*pad nirbān*). Fortunate are they who sing God's praises. Their sins are washed away, like Ajamal who was redeemed by God in the end and attained a state that is desired by great *jogīs*. God bestows the gift of fearlessness through his grace. The Saints (Gurus) showed mercy out of their kindness and made it clear that the whole of *dharm*

consists of singing the praises of God. The fear of death vanishes by remembering the name of God even for a moment. By taking refuge in God, appropriating the name and singing God's praises, one may cross the ocean. This is possible only through the name of God. The noose of death does not spare the *jogīs*, *jaṅgams* and *saṇyāsīs*. Through the wealth of the name, the mind is stilled and becomes stable. *Māyā* and *maṃtā* vanish and pure *giān* makes its appearance. God's *bhagṭī* is appropriated. The fear of rebirth and death is removed by the jewel of the name. Gone is all thirst from the mind and peace has dawned. One sings God's praises only if God is gracious. This treasure is found rarely, and only by turning to the Guru. Whatever we see disappears like the shadow of a cloud. Discard pride and take refuge with the *saṇits* so that you may soon attain to liberation. Without *bhajan* of God there is no peace even in a dream. There is no point in wasting your life in the pursuit of *māyā*. Take refuge in God. No one stays here; whatever is created is destroyed. The tie is tightened by regarding this false body as true. He who appropriates God's *bhajan* becomes liberated.

For Guru Tegh Bahadur, as for his predecessors, the goal of life is liberation-in-life. One does not have to renounce the world for the attainment of this goal. Though *māyā* and *haumai* present serious obstacles on the path to liberation, it is possible to cultivate an attitude of detachment: living in the world and in the society but performing all actions in accordance with God's will. Essential for liberation as an experience of bliss and fearlessness are dedication to God in love and awe, remembering him and singing his praises in association with others, the Guru's guidance and God's grace. This conception of the path and the goal is strictly Sikh.

The *shaloks* of Guru Tegh Bahadur reinforce the *shabads* on the theme of liberation. In fact the expression

becomes even more trenchant in the *shaloks*. Why are you so engrossed in *māyā* that you are not detached (*udās*) even for a moment? Turn to the *bhajan* of God so that you are not subjected to the noose of death. The redeemer of sinners, the remover of fear, God is the protector of those who have no protection. He is always close to you. God is the bestower of all comforts, there is no other. Only by remembering Him one may attain the desired state. Turn to him before it is too late. God is within everyone, as declared by the *sanīs*. Remember him so that you may cross the ocean. He who is indifferent to joy and sorrow and who is not affected by greed, attachment and pride is like God. Praise or blame does not matter to him; gold and iron for him are the same. He is the liberated one. He is not affected by joy and sorrow; the enemy is like a friend for him. He is the liberated one. He who discards *māyā* and *mamā* and becomes detached, in him dwells God. The one who recognizes God as the only doer and discards *haumai* is truly liberated. The one whose tongue utters the praises of God and whose ears hear the name of God shall not be subjected to the noose of death. The one who remembers God day and night is the veritable form of God; there is no difference between such a devotee of God and God. Wandering through births, the fear of death never vanished. Turn to the remembrance of God so that you may dwell in the Fearless One. The one who practises the remembrance of God may be liberated. There is no difference between such an individual and God. All crises are resolved by remembering him.

The rulership of the earth is ephemeral like the wall of sand. It is unlikely that this would refer to the empire of Aurangzeb who prided in the title 'conqueror of the world' (*'ālamgīr*). But the following *shalok* may not be irrelevant to the situation: 'He who frightens no one and is afraid of no one is the real *giānī*'. Guru Tegh Bahadur's *giānī* is liberated-in-life. The statement in the *shalok* appears to



reflect his own attitude. The attitude of not being afraid in the pursuit of cherished ideals, and not frightening others in any way is a feature of the Sikh conception of liberation-in-life. It reinforces social commitment and social action.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's concern for liberation was matched by his concern for spiritual freedom, his own and that of others. As a matter of principle, this concern was dearer than life. It was the logical culmination of Guru Nanak's concern for the freedom of conscience.

### Notes and References

1. For direct and indirect evidence on the themes of this chapter, see *Shabdārth Sri Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, pp. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7-8, 14, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 55, 56, 58, 59-60, 61, 62, 64, 65, 68, 69, 70, 77-8, 83, 87, 91, 96, 97, 102, 103, 106, 107, 108, 111, 116, 117, 121, 129, 136, 137, 140, 141, 142, 147, 149-50, 153, 154, 156, 160, 162, 166, 167, 169, 172, 173, 175, 176, 180, 192, 198, 204, 205, 213, 214, 221, 224, 226, 232, 234, 235-6, 256, 266, 272-4, 275, 302, 305-6, 310-11, 322, 353, 356, 357, 359-60, 361, 365, 366, 370, 371, 374, 376, 378, 381, 385, 388, 389, 391, 392, 394, 399, 406, 411, 413, 414, 415, 416, 418-9, 421, 426, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 443, 444, 445-6, 449, 450, 451, 454, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 468, 470, 490, 491, 492, 495, 496, 498, 499, 500, 505, 508, 511, 512, 513, 514-6, 517, 518, 519, 520, 522, 528, 531, 534, 535, 542, 548, 549, 550, 552, 554, 555, 558, 560, 565, 567, 571, 584, 590-1, 592, 593, 596, 597, 598, 599-600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 610, 611, 614, 619, 622, 634, 635, 636, 645, 646, 648, 649, 654, 664, 665, 667, 668, 730, 731, 732, 736, 737, 740, 741, 742, 743, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 752, 755, 756, 757-8, 763, 767, 768, 769, 770, 777, 785, 756, 788, 790, 799, 800, 811-2, 816, 816-17, 831, 835, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 861, 864-5, 867, 878, 880, 881, 882, 885, 889-90, 904, 907, 908, 916, 917-22, 978, 987, 991, 994, 997, 1000, 1001, 1002, 1004, 1009, 1010, 1011, 1012, 1013, 1024-5, 1026, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1037, 1039, 1040, 1041, 1043, 1058-9, 1068, 1070, 1075, 1076, 1089, 1091, 1092, 1126-7, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1135, 1136, 1138, 1144, 1145, 1146, 1170, 1188, 1198, 1201, 1202, 1212, 1221, 1223, 1243, 1246, 1247, 1256, 1258,

1263, 1264, 1274, 1276, 1279, 1282, 1294-6, 1299, 1314, 1316, 1322, 1324, 1326, 1328-9, 1329, 1332, 1333, 1335, 1340, 1342, 1343, 1344, 1345, 1411, 1412, 1413, 1414, 1423-4, 1425, 1426, 1429.

2. For the relevant verses on supplication (*ardās*), see *Shabdārth*, pp. 25, 40, 41, 49, 55, 91, 103, 107, 136, 169, 178, 192, 193, 194, 203, 354, 389, 392, 396, 402, 415, 421, 499, 518, 519, 534, 571, 747, 749, 752, 996, 1340.
3. For Guru Tegh Bahadur's *bānī* in relation to liberation, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 219-20, 411, 536, 631-4, 684-5, 702-3, 830-1, 901-2, 1008, 1231-2, 1426-9.

## CHAPTER IV

# The Emerging Pañth

Embodied in new institutions, the egalitarian ideology of Guru Nanak became the basis of a new kind of social organization. The increasing number of Sikhs under his successors made them increasingly aware of their entity and importance. Their self-image in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* reflects their vision of a new social order. Guru Arjan's *halemi rāj* represents the entire dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors as the result of a new ideology. The essential constituents of this dispensation were the Gurus and the Sikhs, their institutions, their scripture and their sacred space, their organization and their human and material resources. We may look at the *bānī* of Guru Nanak and his successors from this perspective for their idea of a new social order emerging under their leadership and its significance in their eyes.

### 1. Guru Nanak: The Beginning

We have noticed earlier that a new socio-religious fraternity came into existence in the lifetime of Guru Nanak, consisting of his Sikhs who met in congregation for worship presumably led by the Guru. In his dialogue with Siddhs, Guru Nanak refers to his path as *Gurmukh Pañth* in which praises of God are 'our captial' and the all pervading light of God is 'our support'; the one who drinks the nectar of the Guru's instruction becomes acceptable in the divine court, attaining the state of liberation. The disciples whose gurus are blind get nowhere. Without the True Guru one does not find the Name and there can be no liberation without the Name. The

right door and the right home is found through the Guru. There is only one door and only one path; the Guru is the ladder for the divine court through the True Name. The Guru and the Sikhs, together, represent a new kind of association. As we noticed earlier, Guru Nanak uses several terms for this association : *saṅgat*, *Gur-saṅgat*, *Gursant-sabbā*, *sant-sabbā*, *Sikh sabbā*, and *sādh-sabbā*. The statements related to this association leave no doubt that Guru Nanak is talking of the Sikh congregation. In the *sant-sabbā* one finds the Guru and receives the gift of liberation. The One Name is recited in the *sat-saṅgat* and the True Guru gives the understanding that the Name alone is ordained by God. The praises of God in the *sant-sabbā* become the best of acts in accordance with *Gurmat*. The *manmukh* remains alien to *nām*, *dān* and *isnān*, without the sweet taste of *sahaj* in the *sādh-sabbā*. By turning to the Guru in the *saṅgat* of *sants* one acquires the merit of pilgrimage to sixty-eight places by the Guru's sight (*dars*). In *sat-saṅgat*, the *sevak*s of the Guru reflect on his *shabad*, realize the divine presence within, attain liberation, and become the means of liberation for others. Rare are such persons in the world who reflect on the Guru's *shabad*, remain detached, swim (across the ocean of death and re-birth) and enable others to swim across. The fruit of truth is found in the *sat-saṅgat* where God's praises are sung. Misery and suffering end with joining the *gursant-sabbā*; one is united with God. The Guru is like a sacred river; the dirt of sins is removed by bathing in this river by joining the *sant-sabbā* and by acting in accordance with the Guru's guidance. In the *gur-saṅgat* one recognizes God by recognizing His presence within.

The way in which Guru Nanak refers to the Sikhs, the Guru, and the *saṅgat* enables us to appreciate some of the other verses which have a close bearing on the new dispensation. The one who is bestowed with the gift of God's praises (*sifat-sālāh*) is the king of kings. All the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage are at the feet of the Guru. The ones

who praise the One Lord are good; they are imbued with the love of the *shabad*; their *saṅgat* is the source of bliss; they are honoured with the order of truth and the banner of the True Name; they recognize *bukam* and live in accordance with it. The *gīrbīsevak* who is attached to *gurmāt* is a Sikh who practises *bhagti* through *nām*, *dān*, and *isnān* as a householder; he has found the true door and the true home from the Guru; he worships none but God and does not go to any *maṛhī* or *masān*.

The Sikh of the Guru rises above the considerations of caste (*jāt-baran*) and family (*kul*) by reflecting on the *shabad* in accordance with the Guru's instruction. The rare persons who have discarded the distinctions of caste are actually the Sikhs of the Guru. In the Guru's presence, as in the court of God, there is no consideration for caste or birth. The ones who are alien to the Name have no honour. They who forget God are of low caste. In the *bāṇī* of Guru Nanak there are clear intimations of the kind of life pursued by his followers. They have lodged the True One in their hearts and they are never forgetful of the Name. They sing God's praises in congregation in the Guru's presence. The Sikhs, *sevak*s and *bhagat*s have found the Guru's door; they are dedicated to bhakti through *nām*, *dān*, and *isnān*. They are householders, truly detached-in-attachment.

Guru Nanak's comment on certain customs and ceremonies suggests their rejection in favour of new beliefs and practices. The traditional songs for marriage should be replaced by hymns on the union with God. The singing of Guru Nanak's *Alāhanīān* was meant to replace the traditional modes of lamentation. People are anxious about the disposal of the dead body; no one knows or wants to know where the soul has gone; what the dead person did in his lifetime is far important than the way in which his body is treated after death. Equally futile was the performance of *kiryā* by the Brahmans for the dead man's sojourn to the next world which involves the feeding of Brahmans and the floating of

lamps. There was no room for these traditional rites and rituals in the ideology of Guru Nanak. His comment carries the implication that singing of Guru Nanak's hymns relating to these rites and rituals are the alternative for his followers.

There is a divine sanction behind Guru Nanak's dispensation. He was called by God to his court and given the robe of true adoration with the nectar of the true name. They who taste it through the Guru's instruction attain to peace. The minstrel spreads the message of the *shabad*. He utters the divine *bānī* as he receives it from the Lord. 'I have spoken what you have made me speak'. They who follow the Guru's path reap the profit of liberation through the *bānī* and the *shabad* of the Guru. 'Regard the *bānī* of the true Guru as nothing but true; he is one with God'.

Guru Nanak looked upon the new dispensation as distinct from the known religious traditions. The Vedas are compared with the *giān* of Guru Nanak's conception. The Vedas talk of virtue (*pun*) and vice (*pāp*) and of heaven and hell : good and bad deeds are the basis for this treatment after death. The *giān* of Guru Nanak involves adoration of the greatness of the True One and the True Name. Truth is reaped by sowing truth and the devotee finds a place in the divine court. The Vedas stand for trade, but *giān* is the capital received through God's grace. Without this capital no trader can carry any merchandise with him. People talk of the four cosmic ages, each with its own way laid down in the Veda for the age. For Kaliyuga, the Veda prescribed was the *Atharvana* which recommended ritual worship. For Guru Nanak, however, the way to liberation in Kaliyuga is the one advocated by him : appropriation of the Name, recognition of *bukam*, and living in accordance with the divine will.

## 2. Guru Angad: Extension

Guru Angad's message is for all and not for only a *Jogī*, a Brahman, a Khatri or a Shudra. There is only one nectar and

no other; it is in the mind, found through the Guru's grace. There is the treasure of the Name in the body. It is found through the Guru. The Vedas talk of virtuous and sinful actions according to which one may go to heaven or hell. The world remains under the illusion of high and low castes and distinctions of other kinds. The nectar-like *bānī* of the Guru is the result of reflection and understanding; it reveals the essence. Uttered by the Guru it is understood by the Sikhs who reflect on it through God's grace. All creation is the result of divine order (*bukam*), it functions in accordance with the divine order, and it is preserved through divine order. Through the Guru's *bānī*, *haumai* is shattered and one becomes acceptable in the divine court.

Guru Angad looked upon the whole of mankind as equal in the eyes of God. The human beings in all their variety are created by Him; He alone is the Master of all; since all have the same Master, none can be regarded as bad (*māndā*). Even the self-centred *manmukh* cannot be condemned outright, though he prefers boons over the bestower, and tries falsely to show that he is good; in him too there is the light (*jot*) of God.

However it is in accordance with God's will (*razā*) that the *manmukh* is overthrown when he opposes the one who has turned to the Guru. The one who shoots arrows at the sky is bound to miss the target, and the arrows fall on him. The one who does not turn to God wastes his life. The ones who remain attached to the world cannot attain liberation. The ones who do not appropriate the Guru's *shabad*, continue to suffer from *haumai*. The uninstructed (*ayānā*) follows his own inclination and comes to grief. Friendship with him, as with the great in worldly terms, leads to nothing, like a line drawn on water. The one who makes a false show of piety to earn social recognition serves neither himself nor others. The ones who fail to recognize God and His *bukam* are blind; they cannot see the wealth of the Name; they cannot appreciate the treasure of the Name; when the blind

becomes the assessor of jewels, he merely exposes himself. In the Kaliyuga the rulers are paupers, the learned (*pandits*) are idiots, the judges are blind, those in positions of power are evil. The way out of this impasse is the path shown by Guru Nanak. Thus, Guru Angad pays homage to Guru Nanak as the only redeemer of the modern age. The message of Guru Nanak is universal; like air and water, it knows no caste.

The most striking feature of the *shaloks* of Guru Angad is the use of the epithet Nanak. We are so familiar with the practice that we tend to ignore its significance. Guru Angad was the first Guru after Guru Nanak to use the epithet Nanak for himself. It embodies the declaration that he represents the same light as Guru Nanak and that he derives full authority from him. This can be seen as an expression of the doctrine of the unity of Guruship which has become an essential feature of the Sikh tradition. It is also a tangible expression of the continuity of Guruship.

By turning to the Guru, says Guru Angad, one may recognize God as the only real entity. By turning to the Guru, one may realize that all enlightenment comes from God. Through God's grace, one may appropriate the *shabad* of the Guru. In these *shaloks*, the reference may be to God as the Guru. However, some other *shaloks* simultaneously suggest two levels : God and Guru Nanak. The 'grace of the Guru' may be seen in this light. The Guru is the only key to open the lock of the mind. Perfect is the Guru, perfect his grace and perfect his word. The fortunate one praises God by turning to Guru Nanak. In these *shaloks*, Guru Nanak appears to figure more prominently. Then there is the explicit reference : they who have been instructed by Guru Nanak need no further instruction. We may be sure that Guru Angad refers to Guru Nanak in the well known *shalok* which says : 'a hundred moons may shine, and a thousand suns, but there is darkness without the Guru'. Guru Angad appears to refer to his own installation when he says that miracle is to receive the gift from the Master.



The Guru now emphatically is Guru Nanak and the *shabad* primarily his *bāṇī*. The Guru and *Gurbāṇī*, together with the congregation, represent a new beginning in the socio-religious history of the world. The *bāṇī* of Guru Angad becomes a profound interpretation of Guru Nanak's dispensation. His own work becomes an extension of the work of Guru Nanak, almost literally a part of his body (*aṅg*).

### 3. Guru Amar Das: Emphasis on Distinction

Guru Amar Das refers to the exalted status of the Sikhs. He emphasizes the presence of God in everyone in the first place. There is the same light in everyone. The One takes the form of many. In the different forms there is the same balance of air, water and fire. All belong to God and He belongs to all. This awareness comes to those who meditate on the *shabad*. People talk of the four *varnas* but all spring from the same divine seed; the whole world is made of the same clay and the Potter fashions vessels of many different forms; the same five elements constitute the body; none can make the vessels smaller or bigger. Caste does not count in the divine court: he who recognizes God (*Brahm*) is a Brahman. What counts in the next world is what one has done in accordance with the *shabad*. Without the Name, all are low. Only the one who serves the true Guru is high. One becomes higher and higher through the *shabad*. They who are dyed in the Name are the real kings. 'We have become *uttam* by seeking refuge in God; we are no longer *nīch*'.

The Sikh of the Guru (Gursikh) is referred to in several ways. He is a *saṁt*, a *sevak*, a *bhagat*, a *Har-jan*, a Sikh, a *Gurmukh*. He meditates on the Name. He entrusts his mind and body to the Guru, subdues *haṁmai* and places his trust in God. He sings God's praises day and night, pursues *bhagti* and inspires others to pursue *bhagti*. He meditates on the Name, attains peace through liberation and becomes the

means of liberation for others; he is indifferent to pleasure and pain. Guru Amar Das refers to the Sikh as *dhādhī*: he loves his Master, stands at his door to serve him in accordance with the Guru's *shabad*, and he finds the true home with a place in the divine court. The *dhādhī* is the *Gurmukh* who praises the True One, finds the Name, dedicates himself to the Guru to find the true door and the true home through God's grace. In a whole *solha*, Guru Amar Das talks of the *Gurmukh*: he lives in accordance with God's *bhānā*; he sings God's praises through the *bānī*; he pursues truth; he finds true understanding; he gets rid of *haumai*, *māyā* and *bhram*; he attains liberation; life and death to him are alike; he dedicates his life to the service of God. Through the Guru's grace, the *Gurmukh* experiences the 'fourth state' (*chauthī padvī*) in which he becomes one with the One Eternal God who is the creator of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Guru Amar Das refers frequently to the Sikhs, partly because their number is increasing. In the words of Guru Amar Das, the world is burning and people run to take refuge in God: they submit to the perfect Guru with the supplication that he may save them.

The Guru's instruction is the true instruction. God is found through it and light mingles with the Light. *Nām* and singing of God's praises are associated with the Guru. There is only one nectar, that of the *shabad*, and it is found by turning to the Guru. There is only one Guru, one *bānī* and one *shabad*; there is only one shop stored with true merchandise for true trade. It has the divine sanction. Guru Amar Das refers to a disciple becoming the Guru: in accordance with God's *razā*: the Guru comes from the Guru. The divine sanction behind the Guru's dispensation is indicated also by the statement that when God makes one speak one says what God wants one to say.

Where there is the true Guru, there is the true *saṅgat* in which the praises of God are sung. It is a great good fortune to find the true *saṅgat*. By joining the true *saṅgat*

one gains peace of mind through the true Name. One lives in accordance with the Guru's *shabad* by meeting the *Sādhū* in the *saṅgat*. The ones who live in accordance with the Guru's *bhāṇā* are Sikhs; they are also friends, relatives and brothers of the Guru. No kinship is more important than that of the Sikhs with Sikhs. The way in which Guru Amar Das brackets men and women suggests that women were a part of the *saṅgat*.

Guru Amar Das invites the Sikhs, who are dear to the True Guru, to sing the true *bāṇī*, the *bāṇī* of the Guru, which is supreme. It is lodged in the hearts of the one's to whom God is gracious. Guru Amar Das exhorts the Sikhs to drink this nectar, to remain dyed in the love of God, and sing his praises. The *shabad* of the Guru is a precious jewel. He who appropriates this *shabad* is absorbed in it. When the mind is attached to the *shabad*, one turns to the True One in loving devotion. The *shabad* comes from the Guru as the only means of liberation. Always sing the true *bāṇī*. All *bāṇī* other than the *bāṇī* of the True Guru is unripe. Unripe is *bāṇī* other than the *bāṇī* of the True Guru; all other *bāṇī* is unripe. Unripe are the ones who recite the unripe *bāṇī* and the ones who hear it; unripe is its exposition. They utter 'God' from their lips without knowing Him. Their minds are engrossed in *māyā* and what they say does not carry conviction. Guru Amar Das reiterates that other than the *bāṇī* of the True Guru all *bāṇī* is unripe. The unique status of *Gurbāṇī* is thus sought to be underlined.

The *Anand* of Guru Amar Das celebrates the bliss of union with God. According to Guru Ram Das, this true song of joy is to be sung in the true house where truth is meditated upon. We may be sure that this true house is the Sikh *saṅgat*. Through God's grace the truth is realized through the Guru. The Master bestows it upon the ones whom he likes. Guru Arjan invites the Sikhs to listen to the *Anand* so that all their wishes are fulfilled. They realize God and all their sorrows vanish. By listening to the true *bāṇī*, all sorrows, disease and

curses vanish. Through the perfect Guru, the *sañts* are drenched in joy. The True Guru is present in this *bāñi*, the one who listens to it and utters it, becomes pure. It is significant that both Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan take notice of the *Anand*. The way in which they refer to it lends credibility to the view that the *Anand* was sung on the birth of Hargobind.

Guru Amar Das leaves no doubt that the dispensation of Guru Nanak was meant to transcend all the known religious traditions. This becomes clear from his references to the Kaliyuga. *Kirat* is the light of the world in the Kaliyuga. There is no *karm* or *dharm* for the Kaliyuga : there is no liberation without the Name. In this Yuga, the divine Name alone is the remover of fear and it is found by reflecting on (the *shabad* of) the Guru. In the Kaliyuga, the Name is the treasure that is found through *bhagti* and leads to bliss. *Jam* (Death) is all powerful in the Kaliyuga but subject to the Divine Order. He punishes the *manmukh* but the one who turns to the Guru remains safe. In all the four Yugas there is one treasure for the devotees of God. It is the divine Name. The *dharm* in the first three Yugas, respectively, was *jat*, *sañjam* and *tirath*; in the Kaliyuga it is the praises of God through the divine Name. In this Yuga, the wealth of the divine Name is gained through *bhagti*; the rest of the world remains in illusion. The one who appropriates the Name attains liberation. But no one finds the Name without the Guru. *Dharm* stood firmly on four feet in the Satyug; it stood on three feet in the Tretāyuga and in the Duāpur it was left with two. In the Kaliyuga it has only one foot. Its power is reduced to one-fourth. *Māyā* reigns supreme. The only source of redemption is the Name which is appropriated by meeting the True Guru. It is the only source of liberation in the Kaliyuga. Not *karm-kāñd* but the divine Name is efficacious in the Kaliyuga. There is no other way (to liberation).

Significantly, the season of Basañt, which is the season

of regeneration, reminds Guru Amar Das of the mind regenerated through the divine Name. They who sing God's praises live in the Basant season all the time. The regenerated world is liked by the True Guru. The world is a garden and God is Basant. Thus, the Kaliyuga is the age of regeneration. In any case, the divine Name becomes manifest in the Kaliyuga by turning to the Guru; the treasure of the Name is made manifest in the hearts of those who have taken refuge with the Guru.

Guru Amar Das talks of the 'burning world' (*jagat jalandā*) in a few of his verses. Addressing the *jan* in one, he says that he has woken up on hearing the *shabad* of the True Guru and a new feeling has sprung up within him. May the body without any merit burn because it does not work in the Guru's way. Engrossed in *haumai* and attached to the 'other', the world is burning. 'Guru Amar Das prays that God may save the world on fire through his grace. He goes on to add that God may save the world, whatever the means of redemption (*jit dūare ubre tete lehu ubār*). This does not appear to harmonize with the well considered and emphatically expressed view of Guru Amar Das that the only means of redemption in the Kaliyuga is the Name, that is, the dispensation of Guru Nanak. The *jit dūare* line itself is followed by the statement that the True Guru has shown peace through reflection on the true *shabad*. The '*jit dūare*' in this verse reflects, primarily, Guru Amar Das's deep concern for universal redemption.

For educating the increasing fraternity of the Sikhs, Guru Amar Das expresses concern for matters social. Drunkenness is injurious for both physical and spiritual health. Red dress symbolizes sensual pleasures; it is better avoided. The notion of auspicious and inauspicious days and time is senseless. It is opposed to the Guru's *shabad*. Above all, there is condemnation of female infanticide and disapproval of the practice of *sati* much against the cherished ideal of the Brahmans and the upper caste people. Devotion

to the living husband is preferable to becoming *satī*. Altogether, the social comment in the *bāṇī* of Guru Amar Das is quite considerable.

The *bāṇī* of Guru Amar Das reveals an awareness of slanderers of the *sādhūs* (the Sikhs of the Guru). He reassures the Sikhs that God is on their side. One of God's concerns is to protect his devotees. He has been protecting them in all the Yugas. God saves their honour. It is in this context that Guru Amar Das makes an extended reference to Prahlad. The one whose Master is all powerful cannot be destroyed by anyone. Since there is no one above him, his devotee does not have to be afraid of anyone.

#### 4. Guru Ram Das: The House of Guru Nanak

Guru Ram Das refers to the same air and earth with which all human beings are created, and the same light in all. God has fashioned all vessels of different forms. They all belong to Him and He belongs to them all. The Guru's *manṭar* is meant alike for Brahmans, Khattris, Vaishyas and Shudras. They are welcome to join the Sikh fold.

The Sikhs of the Guru (Gursikhs) are *Har ke jan*, *Har ke saṁt*, *Har ke dās*, *sādhū-jan*, *saṁt-jan*, *sevak*s of the Guru, and *Gurmukh*s. Raising his arm, the Guru gives the loud call to the *saṁts* to take refuge with the true Guru for peace.

The Sikhs become conspicuous in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das and he expresses great esteem and concern for them. Praises of God are their capital. They sow the seed of nectar and reap the harvest of nectar. Guru Ram Das is the slave of the Sikhs who perform the Guru's service. They are his sons and brothers, *sakhīs* and *sabelīs*. Praise be to the Sikh who takes refuge with the Guru, who utters the divine Name, who is pleased to hear the divine Name, and who serves the Guru. Guru Ram Das bows to such a Sikh that conducts himself in accordance with the Guru's *bhāṇā*. Guru Ram Das serves Sikhs as a *sevak*. Some Sikhs are present with the Guru

and others do his work (away from him). The Sikh cannot live without the Guru and he is happy to see the Guru. They come to see the Guru, braving severe cold. They live to see the Guru. They speak of God and they sing of God. The greatness of God is reflected in the praise of his servants. God and his devotee (Sikh) are alike. 'The Guru is Sikh and the Sikh is Guru': they propagate the same message.

The *saṅgat* too figures prominently in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. Accursed is the life of the ones who do not take refuge in the *saṅgat* of the true Guru where there is the light of the Name. It is great good fortune to join the true *saṅgat* where God's *kathā* is pleasing. All dirt is washed away in the *saṅgat* where the perfect Guru is the lake of nectar. In the true *saṅgat* praises of God are sung in the presence of the Guru who gives instruction in the Name for the redemption of the world. The true *saṅgat* is dear to the Guru. Both the mind and the body are regenerated in the *saṅgat*. The Name of Ram is the redeemer of the world; the Sikh should reflect on the Name in the *saṅgat* which is the source of redemption. God abides in the *sat-saṅgat*.

The increasing importance of the Guru is reflected in the *bāṇī* of Guru Ram Das. Fortunate are the ones who sit near the Guru, the *parupkārī* concerned with the redemption of others. The place where he sits becomes fertile and green; the persons who see the true Guru are regenerated. The true Guru gives the armour of *bhagti* against the fear of death. The Sikhs listen to his *updes* and they who accept his *bhāṇā* become four times bright. The way of the *Gurmukh* is distinct. Beautiful is the place where the true Guru sits; the dust of the feet of the Sikhs who come to that place is sanctified. To serve the true Guru is to serve God. Sanctified is the head that touches the Guru's feet. The *parupkārī* Guru gives the gift of the Name. The true Guru utters the divine *bāṇī*; whoever recites or hears it becomes liberated. God has given greatness to the true Guru who propagates the Name; his increasing greatness is liked by the Sikhs, and his

slanderers are helpless because God is the bestower of this greatness. It is in accordance with God's *hukam*. The Guru does not cultivate any earthly faction; he belongs to the side of God who is his support. Guru Ram Das refers to himself as the *abādhī* of God; he went to His door and God listened to his cry and called him inside; God asked him what he wanted and the Guru asked for the Name; God gave him the robe of the Name. God makes Guru Ram Das speak and He speaks through him. Guru Ram Das is, thus, convinced that there is divine sanction behind his dispensation.

An awareness of the dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors is evident in the *bānī* of Guru Ram Das. The use of the term 'Guru Nanak' in the last line of his hymns may refer to Guru Ram Das as well as to Guru Nanak. One finds Nanak as the Guru through the divine writ. The servants of God seek refuge in Nanak as the Guru. Through the divine writ in one's favour, Nanak the Guru becomes gracious and effects union with God. The Sikhs of the Guru have found that wonderful place where the True Guru sits; their labour has become fruitful through the Name; they who worship Guru Nanak are themselves worthy of worship. Through the grace of Guru Nanak they meet God. By divine writ one may meet Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak seems to represent his dispensation through his *bānī* and his successors. Great indeed is Guru Nanak who looks upon all with the same concern and who is above praise and blame. Nanak is the Perfect Guru; one meditates on the Name by meeting the True Guru. Guru Ram Das refers to the House of the Jagat Guru Nanak and its four generations beginning with 'Guru Bābā'. 'We are called the slaves of the True Guru'. 'His mark is branded on our foreheads'.

Guru Ram Das talks about his immediate predecessor. The epithet 'true Guru' is used for Guru Amar Das too. There is a reference to his *langar*. There is a reference also to a hostile ascetic who sends his son to participate in the celebration of the completion of the *bāoli* at Goindvāl. The



most important statement refers to Guru Amar Das's visit to the traditional places of pilgrimage. He visited Kurukshetra at the time of the solar eclipse (in 1553), accompanied by numerous disciples. 'In order to redeem the world did the True Guru undertake the pilgrimage to this bathing place'. The whole world came out to behold him. Annulled were the sins of those who had the touch of the Prefect Guru. *Jogīs*, *Sanyāsīs*, Jain monks, and the followers of the six orders had dialogue with him. The Guru then chanted the Divine Name on the Jamuna; all who followed him were exempted from tax. On the Ganga, the eminent people of the town sought shelter with the True Guru, seeing in him the image of God. Through the Guru's *shabad* and his teaching they became devotees of God. Thus, the purpose of Guru Amar Das's visit to the sacred places to spread the message of the Sikh faith is made absolutely clear: redemption of the world.

The Guru, the Sikhs and their organization represent a distinct tradition. Dharma has only one leg to stand upon in the Kaliyuga. The singing of the praises of God through the *shabad* of the Guru is the medicine (*aukhad*) now. In the Kaliyuga there can be no harvest without the seed of the Name. The message of the Guru, thus, serves as the only leg of *dharmā* in the Kaliyuga. Guru Ram Das makes the explicit statement that the service of the Guru, instruction of the Guru, and *bhāṇā* of the Guru represent a distinct way (*eh chāl nīrālī gurmukhī*). The foremost boon in the Kaliyuga is the Name. The highest state in the Kaliyuga is attained through the praises of God who is found through the True Guru. Praise be to the True Guru who has made the Name manifest. The best form of worship in the Kaliyuga is to praise God in accordance with *Gurmat*. The best means of adoring God in the Kaliyuga is the Name received from the Guru. The Name of God protects the honour of God's devotees in the Kaliyuga. These references leave no doubt

that the path of the Gurus is seen as the only efficacious path in the Kaliyuga.

Guru Ram Das refers to the imitators and their raw and false compositions. The Gursikhs are told to regard the *bāñī* of the True Guru alone as true : God Himself inspires him to speak. Indeed, '*bāñī* is Guru and Guru is *bāñī*; all *amrits* are in the *bāñī* itself'. Just as in the equation of God with the True Guru the institutional Guru is brought to the fore, so in the equation of the Guru with the *Shabad*, the *shabad* as *Gurbāñī* is brought to the fore.

Finally, there is a certain degree of awareness of opposition in the *bāñī* of Guru Ram Das. There is more than one reference to the Guru's detractors (*nindaks*) in general. The response of Guru Ram Das is to assert that God is his protector. One specific opponent is an ascetic known as Tapā who is exposed and suffers humiliation due to his opposition to the Guru. There is a reference to people forming factions. Another hymn refers to the humiliation of an opponent. It is followed by the statement that the true Guru founded a village and appointed guards for its protection. A *nindak* returns to the Guru, his former lapses are forgiven, and he is purified by the true Guru who is devoid of enmity (*nirvair*). Much of this opposition appears to come from within, though not all. However, the state functionaries do not figure anywhere in this context.

## 5. Guru Arjan: *Halemi Rāj*

Guru Arjan is emphatic about human fraternity. God is 'our common father'. When the True One is lodged in the body and the mind, there is no strange place and all enemies become friends. In everyone resides the One who has no limits. All created beings belong to him. 'There is one Father and we are all His children'. 'You are the Father and we all are your children'. Thus, human fraternity springs from the fatherhood of God.

Guru Arjan is equally emphatic about the distinguished status of the Sikhs. In the first place, the message (*updes*) for all the four *varnas* - Khatri, Brahman, Sud and Vais - is common. They can turn to the Guru for the Name for their redemption. The Name, as promulgated by Guru Nanak, redeems the Khatri, the Brahman, the Sud and the Vais alike. However, the Sikhs become *uttam* in this world. God's devotee (Sikh) becomes high even if he belongs to a low caste. A *chāṇḍāl* woman becomes a Brahmani.

The importance given to the Sikh becomes more evident from a hymn of Guru Arjan that relates to the Sikhs. The praise of their *rahit* cannot be adequately expressed. Their occupation is solely with the Name; they find comfort in singing God's praises; the friends and foes are the same for them; they know only of their Lord; they bravely stick to what they say; *māyā* has no lure for them; their company is sought by gods; their service never goes waste; 'with folded hands' Guru Arjan prays that he may be given the boon of serving them. In the hymn entitled *Gunwantī* the opening and the closing line says, 'when I see a Sikh of the Guru I bend lower and lower to touch his feet'. In another hymn, his preference for the service of the *saṁts* over the enjoyment of power and wealth is explicitly stated. In a hymn that is often sung at *bhogs* after death, Guru Arjan talks of the fulfilment of a *sevak's* love for God. He remembered his Master throughout his life as at the time of his death. He never turned away from the ordinance of the Master. He remained happy in his home and ran to the Master on his call. He welcomed every order of the Master and the Master showed his grace to redeem him here and in the hereafter. Praise be to the *sevak* whose life's purpose is fulfilled by recognizing the Master.

Guru Arjan says that he has received everything from the *sādh-saṅgat*. He who sings God's praises in the *sat-saṅgat* receives the perfect wealth, God; when his self is annihilated he sees God everywhere. He who sings God's

praises in association with *sādhbs* (all his sins are washed away and) he becomes pure. The Only True One abides in the *sādh-saṅgat*. God (*kartā*) is always with the *sants* in the city of God (*Kartārpur*). 'Ever since I have found the *sādh-saṅgat*', says Guru Arjan, 'I have forgotten all envy of others'. There is no foe and no stranger, we have amicable relations with everyone. Whatever is done by the Lord we regard that as the best. This wisdom we have received from the *sādhbū*. The One God pervades all and 'we feel happy to see it all'.

The institutions which served as the instruments of spreading *nām-dharm* in the world are given great importance by Guru Arjan in his compositions. He makes the explicit statement that all sins are washed away by bathing in Ramdas Sarovar. He exhorts the Sikhs to sing the praises of God everyday in congregation (*sādh-saṅg*): 'all one's wishes are fulfilled by lodging the perfect Guru in the heart'. This pool is the work of the creator. There was no shortage of money and materials. This was the will of the Merciful One who completed the perfect design. All his wealth and riches belonged to God who stood amidst the *sants* to complete the work and to ensure that everything went right. Beautiful is the earth and beautiful is the pool with its nectar-like water. All objectives have been fulfilled and all sorrows have vanished. True to his nature God bestows all gifts on his devotees. All the merit of bathing at sixty-eight places, all charities, rituals and good deeds are here. All sins are washed away by bathing in Ramdas Sarovar. This source of purification is a gift of the Perfect Guru. Through the Guru's *shabad* everything is in the right place. The dirt is removed in the *sādh-saṅg*, with God as the kind friend.

Guru Arjan refers to 'the house having been raised'. This may be a reference to the Harimaṇdar. There is a direct reference to God's temple (*Har-maṇdar*) erected for meditation on Him; the *sants* and *bhagats* sing His praises. By meditating on the Master they get rid of all their sins.

By singing God's praises through the divine *bāṇī* they attain liberation. It was a happy conjunction and an auspicious moment when the eternal foundation of God's temple was laid. This could happen only through God's grace. In another *shabad*, God's abode (*ghar*) is mentioned along with the pool and the garden as the sign of God's pleasure. By meditating on God and singing his praises, all wishes have been fulfilled. By attachment to the Guru's feet the mind is filled with joy. Through the Master's grace, our life is blessed in this world and the next.

The sanctity attached to the Sarovar and the Harimaṇḍar is extended to the town of Ramdaspur. 'I have seen all places', says Guru Arjan, 'but there is none like you'. Thickly populated, the sprawling Ramdaspur is extremely beautiful since God himself founded it. Through his grace, God has established his own rule in Ramdaspur. In the compositions of Guru Nanak and his successors, Ram is a familiar epithet for God. *Rām-rāj* refers, therefore, to divine rule and not the rule of the Rama of Ayodhya. Nothing untoward happens if we meditate on God; the enemy runs away when the Name is praised. Ramdaspur was a town with which the Mughal administration had nothing to do.

Guru Arjan talks of Abchal Nagar where peace comes through *nām*, which has been established by the creator and where all one's wishes are fulfilled, where the praises of God are sung and everything is in its proper place, where God is the protector, the father and the mother, where houses and shops look beautiful cheek by jowl, where the gifts of God increase everyday, where all living beings are at peace under God's care, where the *sanits* of God exchange their views, where the noose of transmigration is cut off, and where one discovers God through His grace. This eternal city of God appears to be a metaphor for the dispensation of Guru Nanak.

Elsewhere too, Guru Arjan depicts the ideal city (*abchal nagari*) in terms of the dispensation of Guru Nanak. There

is no room for the five adversaries (*kām*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *moh* and *haṅkāra*); all sins are removed through the Guru's instruction; the city wall is made of *sachch* and *dharm*; the seed of *nām* is sown here; the *sāhu* and his agents are equally prosperous; the Guru's service day and night is the goods for sale; the shops hold *shāntī*, *sahaj* and *sukh* as merchandise; there is no fine and no taxes; they who trade in *nām* take large profits home; the True Guru is the *sāhu* and the Sikhs are his *banjārās*. This is the city eternal of Guru Nanak Dev.

Guru Arjan refers to the ordinance of the Merciful One that none shall oppress another, that all shall live in peace now that the mild rule (*halemī rāj*) has been established. It has divine sanction. Guru Arjan is a champion wrestler of God. Guru Arjan uses the plough of Truth to sow the seed of the Name and hopes to harvest God's grace. God has assigned this task to him and he performs it in accordance with His will. Putting on a robe of honour in His court, God has made Guru Arjan the headman. The village is well settled. Guru Arjan's sole occupation is to serve the Master. There is hardly any doubt that *halemī rāj* refers to the entire dispensation headed by Guru Arjan. Significantly, he goes on to refer to the *dharmśāl* of truth that he has established. He seeks Gursikhs to wash their feet and wave the fan over them, and to bow at their feet. They who hear of the Guru come to him to receive the boon of *nām*, *dān* and *isnān*. A whole world has been redeemed.

Guru Arjan refers to the *Granth* (*pothī*) as the abode of God. Here the equation of *bāṇī* with the *shabad*, of *shabad* with the Guru, and of the Guru with God is assumed. The *pothī* contains the Name as the means of redeeming mankind. With truth, contentment, and contemplation, the ambrosial Name sustains all existence and saves all who appropriate it. This is the indispensable means to be cherished by all. When darkness is lifted, the manifestation of God is seen in all that is visible. Characteristically, Guru

Arjan attributes the compilation of the *Granth* to the grace of God. He is grateful for its completion through God's grace. The *Granth* as the embodiment of God's grace can be seen as the primary means of advancing the *halemī rāj*, or the dispensation of Guru Nanak, established through divine ordinance for the redemption of humankind.

Significantly, Guru Arjan refers directly to Guru Nanak a score of times. It is absolutely clear that Guru Nanak for him is the founder of a new dispensation. There is limitless joy and no sorrow in 'the house' of Nanak. God has given him an inexhaustible treasure that is meant for all. The eternal foundation laid by Nanak is becoming stronger day by day. His greatness has been made manifest in the entire world. The storehouse of *bhagti* which God has entrusted to him is the source of liberation. Greater than all, he is the saviour of all, like God. The lamp of the Name has lighted the world and all darkness is gone. Guru Nanak represents the veritable spirit of God.

There is a reference to this dispensation in *Rāj Bhairo* : all brothers, their friends and their families have attained liberation by being united with the Eternal Father. Others receive this boon from them. Their mansions are the tallest and their realms are endless. This rule is everlasting. Its fame has spread all over the world and it is praised in every home.

The dispensation of Guru Nanak has an exclusive validity for the Kaliyuga. The inaccessible Lord has graciously conferred on the Guru the 'devotion of the Name' in order to redeem the Kaliyuga. The lowest of the low have become devoted to it. The other *yugas* were reckoned noble earlier but now the Kaliyuga is supreme among all the *yugas*. Every human being is judged on his own merit and the prayers of the devotees are granted. The bliss of God's sight has become possible for all. This idea is reinforced in *Mārū Soble* where the singing of God's praises is proclaimed to be the supreme means of liberation in the Kaliyuga. Only they attain liberation who receive the boon of the Name through the

Master's guidance. They alone are saved who seek the Master's shelter. A seed sown in the wrong season does not sprout. The singing of God's praises in congregation is the supreme act in the Kaliyuga. Through the Master's guidance, the people utter the Name Divine. In *Rāg Basant* it is emphasized that the Name is the proper seed to be sown in the Kaliyuga. In the spring of spiritual joy, the ones who are directed by God blossom forth. 'Sow the seed of the Name now that Kaliyuga has come. This is not the season for any other crop'. The Kaliyuga is the age of the Name, the *dharm* promulgated for the whole of humankind.

The *bāñī* of Guru Arjan reflects an acute awareness of opposition. He refers to an enemy having been burnt in fire. God does perfect justice and protects his servant. A slanderer dies of fever. Another who signs a false affidavit (*mahzar*) against the Guru suffers for his misdeed. Through the Guru's grace a slanderer is removed by an unseen arrow of fate. In a moment he becomes all ash and meets the end he deserves. God saves the Guru from Sulhi; his hands cannot reach the Guru and he himself dies. The Master kills him and he becomes dust in a moment. He dies thinking ill of the Guru; the creator pushes him into the pit of death. The Merciful God listens to the Guru's prayer to save him and fills the mouth of the slanderer with ash. The poison has no effect and the evil Brahman himself dies of ache. God protects his devotees. He protects his servant like father and mother. The face of the slanderer is blackened in this world and the next. God listens to the prayer of His devotee and the one who thinks ill of him is disappointed. God takes His servant in protective embrace and throws the slanderer into fire. God protects His devotees from evil-doers. The evil-doer finds no place and comes to his deserved end. He meets his deserts. The servant of God remains in His refuge. Guru Arjan makes a general reference to divine protection for him and the Sikhs: 'All around us is the *chaukī* of the *shabad*



of the Guru for our protection'. 'All around us is the protective line of Rām'.

These situations relate to internal opposition and external hostility, and the possibility of collusion between them. Guru Arjan's safety in all these situations is a sign of God's grace. The specific instances illustrate the general idea that God protects his *bhagats* in all situations. This conviction springs from the increasing realization of God's will through Guru Nanak and his successors, the institutions they establish, and the popularity they gain. Divine protection is built into the *halemī rāj* founded with divine sanction.

Historians of the Sikh movement refer to the Sikh Panth as 'a state within the state' in the early seventeenth century. They look at the situation from outside. Seen from inside, it is *halemī rāj*, not 'a state within the state' but a parallel dispensation not bound by any territorial boundaries.

## Notes and References

1. For the relevant verses of Guru Nanak, see *Shabdārth Sīrī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, pp. 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 12, 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 58, 61, 62, 72, 83, 138, 147, 148, 152, 350, 353, 356, 358, 360, 414, 419, 437, 465, 468, 469, 470, 566, 579, 580, 581, 596, 597, 634, 636, 648, 763, 764, 1023-5, 1026, 1028, 1030, 1032, 1039, 1040, 1126-7, 1168, 1170, 1188, 1198, 1243, 1279, 1284, 1286, 1287, 1328, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1342, 1343, 1411.
2. For the relevant verses of Guru Angad, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 83, 89, 137, 138, 146, 148, 150, 462, 463, 466, 469, 474, 475, 787, 788, 791, 792, 947, 954, 955, 1086, 1093, 1237, 1238, 1239, 1243, 1278, 1280, 1288, 1290.
3. For the relevant verses of Guru Amar Das, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 27, 28, 29, 36, 39, 65, 69, 86-7, 90, 113, 120, 123, 127, 159, 160, 161, 162, 229, 230, 244, 245, 363, 365, 425, 426, 490, 513, 514, 516, 552, 554, 571, 582, 600, 601, 602, 637, 644, 645, 646, 649, 650, 664, 754, 757, 787, 790-1, 797-8, 850, 880, 917-22, 994, 1058-59, 1088, 1091, 1092, 1128, 1130, 1172, 1248, 1277, 1334, 1413.
4. For the relevant verses of Guru Ram Das, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 10, 40, 78, 79, 86, 87, 91, 95, 96, 163-4, 167, 171, 234, 235, 302, 305,

306, 307, 308, 310, 311, 312, 314, 315, 316, 317, 366, 443, 444, 445-6, 449, 450, 451, 493-4, 494, 504, 575, 576, 592, 593, 648, 652, 653, 667, 731, 732, 733, 757-8, 758, 759, 773-4, 774-5, 799-800, 800, 835, 850, 853, 854-5, 861, 881, 882, 978, 995, 997, 1116-7, 1135, 1198, 1200, 1202, 1239, 1263, 1294-6, 1297, 1310, 1312, 1314, 1326, 1335.

5. For the relevant verses of Guru Arjan, see *Shabdārth*, pp. 13, 42, 43, 44, 73-4, 97, 101, 107, 108, 131, 176, 186, 188, 189, 193, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 204, 211, 262-96, 381, 392, 396, 399, 406, 430, 497, 500-1, 517, 531, 535, 577, 610, 611, 614, 620, 620-1, 622, 623, 623-4, 625, 626, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 740, 743, 740-8, 749, 763, 781-2, 783, 783-4, 806-7, 811-2, 814, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820-1, 823, 824, 825, 826-7, 864-5, 867, 869, 885, 889, 895, 916, 927-9, 999, 1000, 1001, 1081, 1086, 1087, 1136, 1138, 1141, 1180, 1185, 1193, 1217, 1226, 1271, 1299, 1338, 1362, 1387, 1429.

## CHAPTER V

# The Structure of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*

The first striking feature of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is its script: Gurmukhi. Generally its invention is attributed to Guru Angad. But Guru Nanak is known to have recorded his compositions in this script, as if a new script was needed for a new message. The Gurmukhi alphabet consists of 35 letters, which fall into 7 groups of 5 letters each. The first three of these letters are used to write vowels at the beginning of words, the remaining 32 letters represent consonants. The direction of writing is from left to right.<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, the Gurmukhi script is not an invention. Several scripts derived from Brahmi were current in north-western India and Guru Nanak was familiar with them. He gave a new orientation and form to the familiar letters in order to create a script suitable for recording his *bāṇī*. And this script was adopted, popularized and slightly modified by his successors so that by the end of the seventeenth century we come upon the beautiful script of the tradition developed at the court of Guru Gobind Singh. Irrespective of the language of the compositions included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, the script uniformly used is Gurmukhi, the sacred script of the Sikhs.

The language of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* draws upon a variety of local languages and dialects. The language used by the Gurus for the bulk of their compositions from Guru Nanak to Guru Arjan is similar to the language of the *Vārs* of Bhāi Gurdas and the *Janamsākhīs*. However, there is a

partial transition to a simpler language even from Guru Nanak to Guru Arjan. It is different from the Braj variety of Hindi, which is the principal component of the language of the *Dasam Granth*.<sup>2</sup> Professor Sahib Singh's *Gurbānī Viākaraṇ* was based on the conviction that it would be helpful in clarifying the text of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.<sup>3</sup> In fact, his *Srī Guru Granth Sāhib Darpan* was based on his understanding of its grammar.<sup>4</sup> The vocabulary of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, according to Professor Sahib Singh, comes largely from the contemporary language of the peoples of north-western India, going back sometimes to Apbhramsha, Prakrit and Sanskrit, and it is from the modern Punjabi.<sup>5</sup> A large number of words from Persian and Arabic have also been adapted, especially by Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan.

Though one may find similarities with some other religious texts, the compilation of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* was meant to be something 'completely new' as the embodiment of 'a unique revealed message'. The new script and the new language was seen to be 'God's newest gift to humanity'. As Guru Nanak says, 'enā akharā maib jo gurmukh(i) bhūjhai tis(u) sir(i) lek(u) na hoī'.<sup>6</sup> His successors were naturally keen to preserve the revealed word as they received it. Guru Arjan ensured the accuracy of the revealed word embodied in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. In the selections of other compositions to be included in the *Granth* he was extremely discriminating. The methodical and systematic organization of the contents of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* in itself makes the Sikh scripture quite a unique work.

## 1. The Basic Arrangement

The *Guru Granth Sāhib* has three distinct parts. The first part consists of the *Japu*, the *Rahirās* (*So Dar* and *So Purkh*), and the *Sobilā*. This part is the shortest, covering no more than 13 pages of the standard text of 1430 pages. It contains the *bānī* of Guru Nanak, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan, and

probably a *shalok* of Guru Angad. The *Japu* is meant to be recited daily at sunrise, the *Rahirās* at sunset, and the *Sobilā* before going to sleep. Being liturgical, these compositions have a special importance of their own.

The last part of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is much larger, covering 78 pages. It contains *Salok Sahskriti* of Guru Nanak and Guru Arjan, the *Gāthā*, *Phunhe* and *Chaubole* of Guru Arjan, *Salok Bhagat Kabīr Jīo ke* (interspersed with those of the Gurus), *Salok Saikh Farīd ke* (interspersed with those of the Gurus), *Savayye Srī Mukhbāk Mahlā 5*, the *savayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs on the Gurus, the *shaloks* of Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan (additional to the ones not included in the *Vārs*), the *shuloks* of Guru Tegh Bahadur, the *Mundāvanī* of Guru Arjan, and the anonymous *Rāg Mālā* at the end. There is no single principle of organization in this part. It is generally referred to as 'miscellaneous'. Nevertheless, the *savayyās* and the *shaloks* are extremely important for their theological, ethical, and political import. The *Mundāvanī* puts, in a sense, a seal on the *Granth* and its indispensability for the humankind. It is followed by Guru Arjan's final expression of gratitude to God for enabling him to complete this great task. The only odd composition in this respect is the *Rāg Mālā* which may appear, indeed, to be redundant.

The middle part of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, its main body, covers 1,339 pages. It is divided into 31 units according to musical modes, called *Rāgs*. Guru Nanak uses 19 *Rāgs* for his hymns. Guru Ram Das uses 11 new *Rāgs* too and Guru Tegh Bahadur adds one more. The sequence of 31 *Rāgs* in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* now is *Srī*, *Mājh*, *Gaurī*, *Āsā*, *Gūjri*, *Devgandhārī*, *Bihāgrā*, *Vaḍhaṇs*, *Soraṭhi*, *Dhanāsrī*, *Jaitsrī*, *Ṭodī*, *Bairarī*, *Tilaṅg*, *Sūhī*, *Bilāval*, *Gauṇḍ*, *Rāmkalī*, *Naṭnārain*, *Māligaurā*, *Mārū*, *Tukhārī*, *Kedārā*, *Bhairō*, *Basant*, *Sāraṅg*, *Malār*, *Kanṛā*, *Kalyān*, *Prabhātī* and *Jaijāwantī*. The last one is a contribution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Consequently, 19 *Rāga* sections generally start with

the hymns of Guru Nanak, 11 generally with the hymns of Guru Ram Das, and one with the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

Apart from the *bāṇī* of the six Gurus, the *Guru Granth Sāhib* contains the compositions of more than 25 other authors, mostly the *Bhagats* and the *Bhaṭṭs*. However, the *bāṇī* of the Gurus accounts for more than nine-tenths of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. The largest contribution from amongst the Gurus comes from Guru Arjan, 2313 compositions, followed by Guru Nanak with 973, Guru Amar Das with 891, and Guru Ram Das with 644 compositions. Guru Tegh Bahadur contributed 116 *shabads* and *shaloks* and Guru Angad only 63 *shaloks*. Among the *Bhagats*, the largest contribution comes from Kabir, 537 compositions. In all, 116 compositions are by Shaikh Farid, 61 by Namdev and 40 by Ravidas. Eleven other *Bhagats* contribute only a score, ranging from four to a single composition each. The *Bhaṭṭs* have 123 *savayyās* which cover about 25 pages. The *Rāmkalī Vār* of Rai Balvand and Satta Dūm has eight stanzas. The *Sadd* of (Bābā) Sunder in *Rāmkalī Rāg* is a short piece of less than two pages.<sup>7</sup>

The hymns of Guru Nanak and his successors appear first in chronological order, in each *Rāg* unit, and the compositions of the *Bhagats* appear in the end, headed by Kabir. The poetic form is another criterion for placement within the *Rāg* unit. *Chaupadās* are followed by *ashṭpadīs*, *chhants* and *vārs*. In each sub-section, the *bāṇī* of the Gurus is placed in chronological order. The compositions of the Bards are placed between *Gurbāṇī* and Bhagat Bāṇī.

The size of the *Rāg* units is extremely unequal. There are 14 *Rāg* units which cover less than 140 pages, giving an average of less than 10 pages. There are three others which cover more than 450 pages, giving an average of over 150 pages. The remaining 14 *Rāg* units give an average of less than 55 pages. Consequently, there is a great variety in the contents of *Rāg* units.

In the category of the smallest size, *Rāg Jaijāwantī* covers less than two pages, consisting of four *shabads* of Guru Tegh Bahadur. *Rāg Bairārī* covers two pages, with *Dopade* of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan. *Rāg Mālī Gaurā* covers five pages, with *Chaupade* of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan, *Dopade* of Guru Arjan, and the *bāṇī* of Bhagat Namdev. *Rāg Tilāṅg* covers seven pages, with a *Chaupadā* of Guru Nanak in *Ghar* 1, a *Tipadā* in *Ghar* 2, four *Chaupadās* and *shabads* in *Ghar* 3, followed by two *Dopade* of Guru Ram Das, and four *Chaupadās* and a *Dopadā* of Guru Arjan in *Ghar* 1, 2 and 3. This is followed by an *Ashṭpadī* of Guru Nanak in *Ghar* 2, the *shabads* of Guru Ram Das, a Kafi of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and the *bāṇī* of Kabir. Thus, the contents become less and less simple with the increasing size of the *Rāg* unit. Significantly, a new category for placement within the poetic form is also in evidence: the *Ghar*.<sup>8</sup>

*Rāg Sūbhī* covers 67 pages, starting with the *Chaupadās* of Guru Nanak, followed by those of Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan, covering 23 pages in all. The *Chaupadās* are followed by the *Āshṭpadīs* of Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan, covering 12 pages in all. The *Āshṭpadīs* are followed by the *Kuchajjī* and the *Suchajjī* of Guru Nanak and the *Gunwantī* of Guru Arjan, followed by the *Chharṇts* of Guru Nanak, Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan. The *Chharṇts* are followed by Guru Amar Das's *Vār Sūbhī Kī*, with his own *shaloks* and those of Guru Angad and Guru Nanak, covering 30 pages in all. The *Vār* is followed by the *bāṇī* of Kabir, Ravidas and Shaikh Farid.

The largest unit is *Rāg Gaurī*. It covers 196 pages. We may notice only the sequence of its major contents: *Chaupade* and *Dopade* of Guru Nanak in *Gaurī Guāreri*, and *Gaurī Pūrabī Dīpakī*, *Chaupade* of Guru Amar Das in *Gaurī Guāreri*, *Chaupade* of Guru Ram Das in *Gaurī Guāreri*, *Gaurī Bairāgan*, *Gaurī Pūrabī* and *Gaurī Mājh*, *Chaupade* of Guru Arjan in *Gaurī Guāreri*, his *Chaupade* and *Dopade*

in *Gaurī Chetī* and *Gaurī Bairāgan* (with *Rahoe*), *Gaurī Pūrabi*, *Gaurī Chetī*, *Gaurī*, *Gaurī Mālṡā*, *Gaurī Mālā* and *Gaurī Mājḥ*, and *Dopade* and *Tipade* of Guru Tegh Bahadur in *Gaurī*. These are followed by the *Āshṡpadīs* of Guru Nanak in *Gaurī Guārerī* and *Gaurī Bairāgan*, of Guru Amar Das in *Gaurī Guārerī* and *Gaurī Bairāgan*, of Guru Ram Das in *Gaurī Purabi* (with a *Karhalā*), *Gaurī Mājḥ* and *Gaurī*. The *Āshṡpadīs* are followed by the *Chhanṡs* of Guru Nanak in *Gaurī Pūrabi*, of Guru Amar Das in *Gaurī Pūrabi* and *Gaurī*, of Guru Arjan in *Gaurī*, and his *Bāvan Akḥkharī*, his *Sukḥmanī* and his *Thiti* in *Gaurī* (with *shaloks*). These are followed by *Gaurī Kī Vār* by Guru Ram Das and also by Guru Arjan. The *Vārs* are followed by *Chaupade* of Kabir in *Gaurī Guārerī*, his *Āshṡpadī* in *Gaurī Guārerī*, his *Chhepade* in *Gaurī Chetī*, his *Chaupade* in *Gaurī Bairāgan* and *Gaurī Pūrabi*, his *Bāvan Akḥkharī*, his *Thitti* and his *Vār*, followed by the *bāṡī* of Namdev in *Gaurī Chetī*, *Pade* of Ravidas in *Gaurī Guārerī* and *Gaurī Bairāgan*, his *Tipadā* in *Gaurī Pūrabi* and his *Āshṡpadī* in *Gaurī Bairāgan*. Thus, we have eight variations on *Rāg Gaurī* and several variations of poetic forms within the general sequence of *Padās*, *Āshṡpadīs*, *Chhanṡs* and *Vārs*. The internal arrangement of the *Rāg* unit is, thus, both simple and complex.

Professor Gurinder Singh Mann points out that *Rāg* was deemed perfectly natural as the organizing principle of the *Ādi Granṡh* because singing of God's praises was at the centre of Sikh congregational worship from the very inception of the community. Guru Nanak refers to himself as *dhāḡḡī* employed by God to sing his praises. Guru Amar Das urges his followers to sing God's praises to cleanse the mind of all impurities; in the *Sadd* he gives instructions for the performance of *kīrtan* on his death. For Guru Arjan, *kīrtan* removes disease, sorrow, and discomfort, and it generates peace, ecstasy, comfort and relaxation. *Kīrtan* eliminates the fear of death and helps one to attain liberation.



The *Janamsākhis* depict Guru Nanak as a powerful performer of *kīrtan*.

G.S. Mann goes on to add that, though the significance of the *kīrtan* cannot be missed, it must not be overstated. Talking about God, reading about God, and writing about God was a part of the Sikh devotion, which explains the importance attached to *paṭh* and *kathā*. Mann underlines that the essence of the Sikh experience of *kīrtan* is not the *Rāg*-related component but the genuine spirit of the devotee yearning to know God and to develop a relationship of his constant remembrance. Guru Nanak and Guru Ram Das express their dislike and disapproval of secular music and misdirected religious music. 'In the Sikh belief system, a *rāg* is simply an effective carrier of the message, which is the element of primary significance in devotional singing'. The *Jaṃpū* is not meant to be sung. *Rāg* is not really central in most Sikh rituals.<sup>9</sup>

Professor Pashaura Singh refers to Guru Nanak's stress on the mode of devotional singing as 'the only efficacious means of liberation' but he also notices that any musical performance that takes people away from God does not find approval in Guru Nanak's *bāṇī*. Moreover, not only the classical *rāgs* but also the popular folk tunes are meant to be used. The *rāgs* used in *Guru Granth Sāhib* were not merely an adoption but rather a new orientation. Following Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, Pashaura Singh states that an important principle followed in this orientation was moderation, to avoid extremes of the emotional ends of self-annihilating sadness and ecstatic abandon. For this reason, the extreme *rāgs* were mixed with others to moderate their effect. The Gurus explicitly state that 'only those *rāgs* should be used which produce a balanced effect on the minds of both listeners and performers'. The final sequence of *rāgs* in the *Ādi Granth* was a blend of a number of popular and regional music systems of north India.<sup>10</sup>

Both G.S. Mann and Pashaura Singh have argued that

the comments of the Gurus on music in general and on certain *Rāgs* in particular clarify their ideas and attitude with regard to the relative importance of the message and the medium. We may look at all these comments. In the context of the indispensability of *shabad*, *bāñī*, and *nām*, Guru Nanak says that music (*rāg*, *nād*) leads the mind astray; with falsehood within, one suffers great misery.<sup>11</sup> In a religious context, Guru Nanak denounces those who sing songs and claim to have found the goal; without the Name, their mind is not cleansed of evil intentions.<sup>12</sup> *Sorathī* is always beautiful, says Guru Nanak, if it lodges God in the mind, cleanses the mind, and leads one to earn an honest living.<sup>13</sup> False are the songs, music, and rhythm which produce pleasure but no love of the divine, and take one away from God; suffering does not vanish by one's own limited thinking; suffering ends only by turning to the Guru and singing the praises of God as the remedy.<sup>14</sup> Guru Amar Das says that *Srī Rāg* is supreme if it leads to love of truth. He defines truth in terms of the Guru's *shabad* and service of the true Guru.<sup>15</sup> For Guru Amar Das, *Gaurī Rāg* is good if it leads to the remembrance of the Lord, true love of God, and His grace.<sup>16</sup> Guru Amar Das makes it clear that a *Rāg* divorced from the Name is useless; such music (*rāg*, *nād*) should be discarded in favour of God's service; *rāg*, *nād* and *shabad* are beautiful if they lead to profound meditation.<sup>17</sup> When God is lodged in the mind through *Rāmkalī Rāg*, says Guru Amar Das, it becomes an ornament; the lotus blossoms through the Guru's *shabad* and one is graced with the treasure of *bhagti*.<sup>18</sup> Similarly, *Kedārā Rāg* can be regarded as good if it leads to love of the *shabad* and to the love of the true One in the *sat-saṅgat*.<sup>19</sup>

Guru Ram Das says that *Rāg* enables one to lodge God in the mind. *Rāg* and *nād* are subsumed in the truth which is priceless. *Rāg* and *nād* do not lead to an understanding of *hukam* which is beyond them. The one who understands the *hukam*, receiving understanding from the True Guru, finds it profitable. Everything comes from God as he wills.<sup>20</sup>

'I have sung the praises of God', says Guru Ram Das, 'through the medium (*nād*) of *Bilāval Rāg*. Through good fortune, I have listened to the Guru's instruction and followed it. I utter the praises of God day and night by lodging God in my heart. My body and mind have become fresh like a garden in bloom. The darkness of ignorance has vanished as the Guru has lighted the lamp of *giān*. Now Nanak, the devotee of God, lives to see Him; may He show His face for a moment'.<sup>21</sup>

Guru Arjan attaches all importance to *bāṇī* without any association with singing. This beloved nectar is not forgotten for a moment. Dyed in the love of God, it shows God; one meets God and remains happy. By uttering the *bāṇī* for a moment one finds access to the Guru and by uttering it all the time one finds God with oneself. This no doubt is the same *bāṇī* as is sung in the *sādh-saṅgat*.<sup>22</sup> By singing the Guru's *shabad* in *bairāg* through the love of the Name one conquers the five adversaries and attains success through the *Mārū Rāg* (which is sung for inducing the spirit for battle). By singing God's praises through the Name one receives honour in the divine court; this juice is quaffed through the *Soraṭhi Rāg*.<sup>23</sup>

Thus, the position of all the four Gurus is clear on this issue. Music by itself has no importance. It is in fact a distraction. It acquires relevance and merit only when it serves the larger purposes of *Gurbāṇī*. The medium must remain subordinate to the message.

The musical richness of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is matched by the richness of its poetic forms. First of all there are more or less the traditional forms like the *Vār*, *Bārā-Mābā*, *Bāvan-Akbarī* or *Paṭṭī*, *Sadā*, *Alābanī*, *Ghoṛī*, *Din-Rain*, *Satvārā*, *Thitī*, *Ruti*, *Sawayyā*, *Maṅgal*, *Birharā*, *Mundāvanī*, *Rāg Mālā*, *Karbalā*, *Vanjārā*, *Aṅjuli* and *Kāfi* which figure in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. There are somewhat less used forms like *Salok Sahskritī*, *Gāthā*, *Ḍakhaṇā*, *Chaubole*, and *Phunbe*. The forms related to the number of

lines in a composition are *Padā*, *Dopadā*, *Chaupadā*, *Pañjpadā*, *Chhakkā*, *Āshṭpadī*, *Chhetukā*, *Chautukā*, *Titukā*, *Dotukā*, *Iktukā*, *shalok*, *paurī* and *chhañt*. Some of the compositions of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* bear specific titles like the *Japu*, *So-Dar*, *So-Purkh*, *Sohilā*, *Anand*, *Sukhmanī*, *Oankār*, *Siddh Gost*, *Āratī*, *Kuchajjī*, *Suchajjī* and *Gunwanṭī*. Thus, there is a wide range of folk tradition combined with innovation.<sup>24</sup>

Of all the folk forms, the *Vār* was the most popular. The *Guru Granth Sāhib* contains 22 *Vārs*, including the *Rāmkalī Vār* of Rai Balvand and Satta Dūm. There are three *Vārs* of Guru Nanak in *Rāgs Mājh*, *Āsā* and *Malār*. Guru Amar Das's three *Vārs* are in *Rāgs Sūhī*, *Rāmkalī* and *Mārū*. There are eight *Vārs* of Guru Ram Das in *Rāgs Srī*, *Gaurī*, *Bihāgarā*, *Vadhañs*, *Soraṭhi*, *Bilāval*, *Sārañg* and *Kāñṛā*. Guru Arjan has six *Vārs* in *Rāgs Gaurī*, *Gūjri*, *Jaisrī*, *Rāmkalī*, *Mārū* and *Basant*. For many of the *Vārs* of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, the popular tunes in which each is to be sung are indicated. Only in the *Basant Vār* of Guru Arjan, there is no *shalok*. In the remaining five *Vārs*, his own *shaloks* are interspersed. In Guru Ram Das's *Kāñṛā Vār* too his own *shaloks* are interspersed. In his remaining seven *Vārs*, the *shaloks* of other Gurus as well as his own are added at many places. The *Gūjri Vār* of Guru Amar Das has only his *shaloks*. In his other two *Vārs*, the *shaloks* of other Gurus as well as his own are added. Two *Vārs* of Guru Nanak have his own *shaloks* and those of other Gurus. In his *Āsā kī Vār*, there are his own *shaloks* and those of Guru Angad. In all cases, the *shaloks* were added by Guru Arjan.

Since Guru Angad wrote only *shaloks*, all his *shaloks* are added at places to nine *Vārs*: 31 in the three *Vārs* of Guru Nanak, 19 in the three *Vārs* of Guru Amar Das, 12 in three of the eight *Vārs* of Guru Ram Das. The *Vārs* of Guru Arjan have no *shalok* of Guru Angad. The *Mārū Var* of Guru Amar Das and *Soraṭhi Vār* of Guru Ram Das have only 1 *shalok* each; the *Vār Malār* of Guru Nanak has 5 *shaloks*;

the *Rāmkalī Vār* of Guru Amar Das has 7 and the *Sāraṅg Vār* of Guru Nanak and the *Vār Sūbhī* of Guru Amar Das have 11 each. The *Āsa kī Vār* of Guru Nanak has 15 *shaloks* of Guru Angad. The *shalok* at the end of the *Japu* is also by Guru Angad.

## 2. The Bhagat Bāṇī

Scholars, generally, have tried to account for the inclusion only of Bhagat Bāṇī in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. Professor Gurinder Singh Mann has discussed the issue of Bhagat Bāṇī in a separate chapter, going into the date of its inclusion, the purpose of its incorporation, the selection and evolution of its corpus, and its status. He sums up his discussion by saying that, in all likelihood, Guru Amar Das incorporated Bhagat Bāṇī into the Sikh scriptural text. This decision was rooted in his belief in the continuity of divine revelation. It provided him an opportunity to emphasize the Sikh vision of social equality. However, the hymns of the *Bhagats* were thoroughly scrutinized, and only those which conformed to Sikh theological and ethical outlook were incorporated within the scriptural text. This process continued through the compilation of the *Kartārpur Pothī* and the *Ādi Granth*. The Vaishnava *bhagats* were not included in the selection due to their conception of God which made their *bāṇī* 'unripe' in the eyes of Guru Amar Das. Even the *bāṇī* of those *Bhagats* who shared Sikh theology was further scrutinized for conformation. Whenever the selected hymns of those *Bhagats* seemed to convey a message even slightly different from Sikh thinking, attempts were made to correct them. In this way, the supremacy of Sikh revelation was asserted. Guru Amar Das's total identification of *Gurbāṇī* with the word of God places it at the very apex of all revelations. This fundamental distinction between the Guru and the *Bhagat* defined the basic structure of the *Ādi Granth*. G.S. Mann points out that, for Bhāi Gurdas, only the most

prominent *saints* like Kabir, Namdev, Ravidas, Beni, Dhanna and Sain were on an equal level with the Sikhs of the Guru. Several other Sikh writers of the pre-colonial period appear to draw a line between the Gurus and the *Bhagats*, trying to explain the presence of Bhagat Bāṇī in the *Ādi Granth*.<sup>25</sup>

Professor Pashaura Singh looks upon Bhagat Bāṇī in the *Ādi Granth* as its distinctive feature. He points out that the term '*Bhagat*' covers the Sant, Sūfi and Bhakti saints. The traditional assumption that Bhagat Bāṇī was included in the Sikh scripture on the basis of complete doctrinal identity with the teachings of the Gurus is questionable. The correspondence observed between the two is due to careful selection and editing. The comments of the Gurus voice their differences from the *Bhagats* on certain important issues. Thus, there is difference as well identity. A clear distinction is always maintained between the *Gurbāṇī* and the Bhagat Bāṇī in the very structure of the Sikh scripture. The writings of the *Bhagats* are kept separate from those of the Gurus and placed at the end. The concept of the Name is common to the *Sant* and Vaishnava Bhakti traditions but in Sikhism the discipline of *nām-simran* is a threefold process: repetition of the sacred name, devotional singing of hymns, and meditation on the nature of *Akāl Purkh*. Guru Nanak made a very clear distinction between his own teachings and practices and those of the others. After examining the *bāṇī* of Shaikh Farid, Bhagat Kabir and Jaidev, Pashaura Singh comes to the conclusion that on the whole it is not the agreement or disagreement that is so important as an attitude of catholicity that promotes mutual respect and tolerance for diversity of belief and practice.<sup>26</sup>

Turning to *Gurbāṇī*, we find that Guru Nanak refers only to the legendary *bhagats* of the earlier cosmic ages to suggest that liberation through *bhagatī* was an old phenomenon and liberation was open to the lowest of the low. Guru Amar Das takes much notice of Prahlad in connection with the idea that God gave protection to his devotees.<sup>27</sup> Guru Amar Das

refers also to Namdev and Kabir, the former as a tailor and the latter as a weaver. They attained a high spiritual position through the perfect Guru. They recognized God and understood the *shabad*; they got rid of *haumai* and their status was no longer low. Their *bānī* was sung by the people.<sup>28</sup> The thrust of this statement is on the low social position of Namdev and Kabir, and their fame due to their spiritual experience expressed in their compositions which had a popular appeal.

Guru Ram Das refers to Balmik and Dhanna who turned to the Guru and attained liberation through *nām simran*. The former used to plunder travellers and the latter was a Jatt. However, neither the evil deeds of one, nor the low social position of the other, stood in his way to liberation.<sup>29</sup> At another place Guru Ram Das places *bhagats* in the context of the accessibility of liberation to the lowest and the protection given to the *saints* by God : Namdev, Jaidev, Kabir, Trilochan, Ravidas, Dhanna and Sain.<sup>30</sup>

Guru Arjan makes loving devotion the means of liberation emphatically for the low Namdev, Kabir, Ravidas, Sain, and Dhanna.<sup>31</sup> Liberation exalts the status of Kabir, Sain, Namdev and Ravidas.<sup>32</sup> A more comprehensive statement by Guru Arjan mentions the medieval *Bhagats* as well as the *bhagats* of the earlier ages. Ajamal uttered the name of God just once and he was redeemed. Balmik, a known *chandāl*, became an associate of *sādhs*. Dhruv met God. Guru Arjan says that the dust of the feet of the *saints*, if received through their grace, should be rubbed on the forehead. A prostitute, Gaṇika, was redeemed by asking her parrot to say Rām. An elephant, Gajindra, was saved by God when he prayed for help. The poor Brahman Sudama was relieved of indigence. The other such examples given by Guru Arjan are those of the hunter who wounded Krishna, Kubija, Bidar, Prahlad and Daropati. Whoever remembered God in the end was redeemed. In recent times, Dhanna, Trilochan, Beni, Jaidev, and Sain were redeemed. God has redeemed his *bhagats* in

the past without reference to their merit or demerit. Kabir dedicated himself to God and Namdev lived with God. Ravidas meditated on the wonderful Lord. When it comes to Guru Nanak, he is the veritable form of God.<sup>33</sup> Here, the difference between the medieval *bhagats* and Guru Nanak is underscored. Far from being the predecessors of Guru Nanak, they were in no way equal to his successors. We may be sure that Guru Amar Das, Guru Ram Das, and Guru Arjan sought no inspiration from the earlier *bhagats*. The themes of universal accessibility to liberation, divine protection for the devotees of God, and exaltation through liberation had a close bearing on the Sikhs of the Gurus.

On the whole, the Bhagat Bāṇī included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* does not go against the message of Guru Nanak and his successors, partly because it was carefully selected and edited. It is occasionally commented upon. In the *bāṇī* of Namdev incorporated in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, his belief in One God, who is both transcendent and immanent, comes out clearly. Namdev does not subscribe to the idea of incarnation and he has no appreciation for worship of idols in temples. He is acutely aware of the Brahmanical opposition to the idea that spirituality was open to the low Shudras but he insists that the low caste can get liberated through *bhagti*. By implication, God is accessible to all. However, the idea of equality is not underscored. There is hardly any political comment in the *bāṇī* of Namdev incorporated in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* and there is no indication that he founded any institution. His message falls much shorter of the message of Guru Nanak.<sup>34</sup>

Kabir of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* appears to have a greater similarity with Guru Nanak than Namdev. His emphasis on the unity of God and the emphatic rejection of incarnation, worship of idols in temples and all Brahmanical rites and rituals bring him close to Guru Nanak. He talks more frequently of the Name, the Guru and the *Shabad*, and also of *bukam* and *nadar* than what Namdev



does. However, the idea of divine self-revelation remains much weaker even in Kabir than what we find in the *bānī* of Guru Nanak. There is a more serious difference. Kabir does not reject monasticism and, therefore, he does not reject mendicancy. Both of these are categorically rejected by Guru Nanak. Kabir rejects the distinctions of caste but he is ambivalent about distinctions based on gender. Like Namdev, and unlike Guru Nanak, Kabir did not found any institution. The emergence of Kabir-Paṁth had to wait for more than a century after his death. Neither Guru Amar Das nor Guru Arjan refer to any formal followers of Namdev or Kabir.<sup>35</sup>

Like Kabir, Ravidas of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* believes in One God who is both transcendent and immanent, both powerful and kind. He does not incarnate. Ravidas sees no point in worshipping idols in temples. Access to God cannot be denied to the lowest of the low. They get elevated, like Ravidas himself, when they attain liberation. There is hardly any comment on gender distinctions, and there is no political comment. Ravidas is not known for founding any institution. The great achievement of his life was that he was a liberated *chamār* honoured even by Brahmans. Despite the greater distance in time, Ravidas appears to be closer to Namdev than to Guru Nanak.<sup>36</sup>

The fourth important *Bhagat* to be given a place in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* was not a *bhagat* but a Sūfī. He is referred to as Shaikh, a term that referred primarily to Muslims. Here, therefore, we have a personality who does not belong to the category even of *saṁtis*. If anything, Shaikh Farid looked upon himself as a better Muslim than those who were in positions of power, and thought of themselves as the true representatives of Islam. He believed in God who demanded total submission but who was related to human beings also through love. Therefore, loving devotion to God was the common feature between Shaikh Farid and the *Saṁtis*. However Shaikh Farid was punctilious about the five daily prayers. He looked upon austerities as meritorious and he

favoured monastic life which was made possible only by the contribution of others.<sup>37</sup>

Another Sūfī represented in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is Bhikhan. In one of his two hymns, he talks of the pangs of separation in old age, referring to God as *Rām Rāi* and *Banwārī* and to his devotees as *saṁts*. The medicine for this malady is *Har kā nām* which is pure nectar. Through the Guru's grace (*gur prasādi*) one may attain the door of liberation (*mokh dwārā*). In the second hymn too there is no Islamic element in the language or the ideas expressed. He talks of *nām* as the treasure lodged in the heart. The praises of God cannot be expressed, as the dumb cannot express the pleasure of eating sweets. The eyes are content to see God.<sup>38</sup> Significantly, Bhikhan is regarded as a *Bhagat*. It is relevant to add that the birth of Kabir in a Muslim family was known to Ravidas and his hymn mentioning this fact is included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. Nevertheless, Kabir is regarded as a *Bhagat*.<sup>39</sup>

Turning to the other *Bhagats* of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* we find that Dhanna talks of his experience of God. In many lives he had remained engrossed in *māyā*, without any good deed to his credit. He remained oblivious of God. Then he met the Guru, learnt how to meditate on God, and attained *giān*. The pursuit of loving devotion led him to peace and the purpose of his life was fulfilled by liberation. His light mingled with the divine light and now God is all his wealth.<sup>40</sup> As noted earlier, Guru Arjan appreciates Dhanna's achievement: the Jatt turned to *bhagti*, following the example of others, and met God; the others who belong to this category are Namdev, Kabir, Ravidas and Sain. Guru Arjan hammers the point that all of them came from the lowest social position: a tailor, a weaver, a cobbler and a barber.<sup>41</sup> Incidentally, the hymn of Guru Arjan, placed between the two hymns of Dhanna, is not a comment on his theology or ethics but an appreciation of the achievement of a low caste. In the second hymn, Dhanna exhorts himself and

others to turn to the merciful Lord who takes care of all living beings.<sup>42</sup> The third hymn of Dhanna has a peculiar interest. He uses the word *āratā* for *ārati*, and prays to God for meeting his mundane daily needs : flour, pulse and *ghee*, clothes and shoes, a cow or a buffalo for milk, a good mare to ride, and a good wife.<sup>43</sup> Dhanna, here, is a householder who is a devotee of God.

Trilochan lays stress on discarding *māyā* and turning to God. He addresses the renunciant (*udāsī*, *sanyāsī*) who has not purified his inner self to see God within himself. His wanderings, begging from door to door, and smearing of the body with ashes remain futile without finding the essence through the Guru. He is churning water : his pursuit cannot lead to liberation. He is wasting his life.<sup>44</sup> In another hymn, Trilochan says that he who remembers God at the time of his death becomes liberated (*muktā*) and God dwells in his heart. This is in contrast with the person who thinks of wealth and is reborn as a snake, who thinks of women and is reborn as a prostitute, who thinks of sons and is reborn as a pig, or who thinks of a house and becomes a ghost to live in abandoned houses.<sup>45</sup> Elsewhere Trilochan says that good or bad deeds are done by human beings; they cannot blame God. The stigma of evil deeds cannot be washed away by anything else but good deeds. Turn therefore, to God.<sup>46</sup>

Beni talks of *Niranjan*, *Rām* and *Parm Purkh*, of Guru, *Gurdeo* and *Gurmukh*, of *Gur kī sākhī*, *shabad* and *anahad bāñī*, and of *giān*, *sunī* and *nām*. By these familiar terms he tries to convey his experience of God through the instruction of the Guru. Loving devotion to God is essential for the experience of liberation. Commendable is control over the five senses, shunning of falsehood, and bearing of the unbearable. Beni prays for the name.<sup>47</sup> Elsewhere, he emphasizes that blind observance of Brahmanical and Vaishnava rituals and practices is not true *dharm*. One should discover the truth within oneself. This becomes possible by

turning to the Guru. The true path is not found without the true Guru.<sup>48</sup>

Sadhna prays for liberation in life. He refers to the story of an ordinary person who changed his appearance for the sake of his love for a princess. Though a selfish and lustful man, he was eventually redeemed when he turned to God. If the effect of Sadhna's deeds is not destroyed it would be a reflection on God's grace. Who will take refuge with a lion that can be eaten by a jackal? What would the rain-bird do with a sea of water if it dies for want of a drop? What would be the use of a boat after one is drowned? 'I am nothing and I have nothing', says Sadhna, 'I am your devotee; only you can save my honour in time'.<sup>49</sup>

Sain says that he is a sacrifice to God (*Kamlāpatī*) whose *bhagti* is his *āratī* of incense, lamps and *ghee*: he sings God's praises every day. Ramanand (his Guru) knows the way of *bhagti* and he has led Sain to God. Sain says that one should sing the praises of God who is the bestower of bliss.<sup>50</sup>

Pipa says that the true Guru reveals the essence of things. He pervades the universe and is present within everyone. He who searches for Him finds Him. Looking for Him in distant lands he has found Him within. He does not have to 'come and go' again and again. The body is the temple of God. One serves God with the body.<sup>51</sup>

A *Bhagat* clearly associated with Vaishnava *bhagti* is Jaidev. In his *Padā* in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, he refers to God as both *Chakkardhār* and *Har*. He talks of *nām* of Rām. The contents of the *Padā* do not suggest Vaishnava *bhagti*. Before everything else there was God whose greatness cannot be described. Wonderous beyond comprehension, he is the bestower of redemption. His name alone is the object of adoration: it is the essence of all worship. His praises result in the removal of all fear. He remains the same all the time and he is the source of bliss. One should discard greed and evil deeds and dedicate oneself to the One God in word

and deed. Austerities and charities are of no use. All gifts are received through the recitation of God's name which is the source of liberation.<sup>52</sup>

In another hymn Jaidev says that all *dubidhā* vanishes by recognizing God and all the merits of Yogic practices are obtained. By trusting the one who alone is trustworthy and by worshipping the one who alone is worthy of worship, water mingles with water. By remembering God, says Jaidev, one is absorbed in God and attains liberation.<sup>53</sup> In the hymns of Jaidev, there is no specific element that can be called Vaishnava. It is interesting to note that Jaidev's last hymn is followed by one of Kabir who reinforces the thrust of Jaidev's hymn.

Similarly, Ramanand, who is generally associated with Vaishnava *bhagti*, does not support Vaishnava *bhagti* in his hymn in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. When God is within, there is no point in wanderings, or offering worship to the *thākurs*. One day he thought of going to the temple with sandalwood paste, fragrance and incense in order to worship God (*Brahm*). The Guru told him that God was within him. God is everywhere and, therefore, wherever one goes there is the place for worship (water and stone). The Vedas and Puranas make it clear that God is everywhere and in everyone. 'I am a sacrifice to the true Guru', says Ramanand, 'who has removed all my fears and illusions'. Ramanand's God is all-pervasive and the Guru's *shabad* washes away the effect of millions of deeds.<sup>54</sup>

Parmanand says that no good has come out of listening to the Puranas. He has performed no *bhagti* and given no charity to the needy. Neither lust nor anger has been discarded nor has greed vanished. Slandering of others continues and all service remains fruitless. The sinner lives on plunder. His deeds would bring only demerit to him in 'the other world'. He does not discard violence and he does not cultivate kindness. He does not go to *sādh-saṅgat* which redeems sinners.<sup>55</sup> There is no Vaishnava element in this hymn.

### 3. Compositions other than *Gurbānī* and Bhagat Bāṇī

As we noticed earlier, *Gurbānī* and Bhagat Bāṇī do not account for the entire content of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. The most obtrusive example is the *Rāg Mālā* which comes at the end. Individual Sikhs have objected to its inclusion from time to time precisely because it has nothing to do with Sikh theology or ethics. It remains a part of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* primarily because it is a part of the *Kartārpur Pothī*, which carries the implication that this decision was taken by Guru Arjan, and the Guru's decision has to be respected.<sup>56</sup>

The other compositions included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* have a direct bearing on the position and status of the Gurus and, therefore, remain relevant for the Sikh tradition. This is eminently true of the *Rāmkalī kī Vār* by Rai Balvand and Satta. It consists of 8 stanzas (*paurīs*), 3 by Balvand and 5 by Satta. In this *Vār*, Guru Nanak starts his rule (*rāj*) by raising the fort of truth on strong foundations. He places the umbrella over the head of Lehna and the sacred mark (*ṭikkā*) on his forehead as a disciple. The fame of Guru Nanak is transferred to Lehna who comes to have the same light and the same way of life as if Guru Nanak has changed his body. With the divine umbrella over his head and sitting on the same throne, Lehna performs the hard task in strict accordance with Guru Nanak's command. The *langar* of the *shabad* feeds all and the praises of God are sung. By the sight of this true king, the dirt of many lives is washed away. Whatever he says comes out to be true and the fame of Guru Angad has spread in the world. (Mātā) Khivi (Guru Angad's wife) looks after the *langar* of food, providing solace like the thick shade of a tree. Bearing the burden of the whole earth, Guru Angad has become acceptable to Guru Nanak. His detractors come to grief.<sup>57</sup>

The same sacred mark, the same seat and the same court passed on from the son (Guru Angad) to the grandson

(Guru Amar Das). With *sahaj* as his mount and *jat* as its saddle, with the bow of *sat* and the arrow of *jas*, Guru Amar Das rises like the sun to shatter darkness. There is plenty of *ghee* and fine flour in his kitchen. They who accept his *shabad* acquire full understanding. They are released from the chain of death and rebirth through the Guru's grace. Guru Amar Das stands like a mountain in all storms. His praise is beyond the competence of Satta.<sup>58</sup>

Praise be to Guru Ram Das, the miracle of the creator who dwells within. The Sikhs and *saṅgats* bowed to him in reverence. They who serve him with love are liberated, getting rid of greed, lust, anger and attachment. Great is his place and great are his followers. He is Nanak, he is Angad, and he is Guru Amar Das; his sight imparts stability. The self-existent and eternal God has manifested Himself in all the four Gurus.<sup>59</sup>

Guru Arjan sits on the same throne under a bright umbrella. His light shines in all the four directions. He who does not serve the Guru is condemned to remain an ignorant fool (*manmukh*). The greatness of the Guru is increasing day by day as true gift of the True One. God has manifested Himself through all the five Gurus.<sup>60</sup>

Apart from praising the Gurus, the *Rāmkalī kī Vār* by Rai Balvand and Satta reaffirms the doctrine of the unity and continuity of Guruship, with divine sanction behind the institution. They appear to speak on behalf of the Gurus.

There are 123 *savayyās* in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* attributed to 11 Bhaṭṭs : 54 to Kalsahār, 5 to Jālap, 8 to Kirat, 2 to Bhikhā, 3 to Salh, 1 to Bhalh, 16 to Nalh, 13 to Gayand, 14 to Mathurā, 5 to Balh, and 2 to Harbans. These *savayyās* are in praise of the five Gurus, from Guru Nanak to Guru Arjan. Kalsahār wrote on all the five; five other Bhaṭṭs wrote on Guru Amar Das; six others on Guru Ram Das; and two other Bhaṭṭs on Guru Arjan. The largest number of *savayyās*, 60, relate to Guru Ram Das and the smallest, 10 each, to Guru Nanak and Guru Angad. On Guru Amar Das and Guru

Arjan, there are 22 and 21 *savayyās* respectively. What is praised in these *savayyās* is the office of the Guru rather than the person.

Guru Nanak is the source of the *shabad*. He founded the tradition of *rāj-jog* in which spirituality is pursued as a householder, combining the spiritual and temporal aspects of life as a single entity. He shows the way to liberation through *nām*. Like the Vaman incarnation of Vishnu, Rama and Krishna in the earlier cosmic ages, Guru Nanak is the object of praise in the Kaliyuga. His rule (*rāj*) is everlasting (*abchal*, *aṭal*). He is the source of *sahaj-jog*. The *Bhagats* like Jaidev, Trilochan, Namdev, Kabir, Ravidas and Beni sing the praises of Guru Nanak. He came to be called Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das.<sup>61</sup>

Guru Nanak placed his hand on the forehead of Lehna who destroyed the evil effects of the Kaliyuga. Guru Angad has conquered the world with Guru Nanak's blessing. The darkness of ignorance vanishes at his door; by serving God through the *shabad*, one attains liberation. One attains the state of *sahaj* in the *saṅgat*. Awakened by the Guru, his followers remain immersed in loving devotion in all humility. Guru Angad is the incarnation of Raja Janak who remained detached like lotus in the water. Guru Angad is aware of the spiritual state of the World-Preceptor Nanak and his fame has spread in all the seven continents of the earth. He too practises *rāj* and *jog*. Like a fruit-laden tree he bends low for the sake of the people. His *amrit bāṇī* moves their hearts. He has the same status as Guru Nanak. They who see Guru Angad attain divine knowledge. To see him is to have the merit of pilgrimage at sixty-eight places. He received the name through the *shabad* of Guru Nanak and the true name makes the *saṅgat* fragrant. To see him is to attain liberation. He is a river of the nine treasures and washes away the dirt acquired in many lives. The pain of death and rebirth vanishes by seeing Guru Angad.<sup>62</sup>

The common bond between Guru Nanak, Guru Angad



and Guru Amar Das is the Name, the source of their fame in the world. The Name that redeems the devotees of God inspires Guru Amar Das. The *saṅgat* is being redeemed by the Name. Guru Amar Das has found the Name that puts an end to the cycle of death and rebirth. He has received it from God. The (Sikh) *saṅgat* has become large. He who has not seen Guru Amar Das is wasting his life. They who have bowed to Guru Amar Das experience no pain, no hunger, and no want. They are not dependent on others; rather, they help others with thousands of gifts; they are well off, and they are shorn of all vice. They have no fear of any kind due to the grace of Guru Amar Das who thinks of God alone, and nothing else. He remains absorbed in the One and by seeing him one attains liberation (*mukṭi*). Guru Amar Das is God's ship for taking people across the ocean of life, as if God has come in the form of Guru Amar Das. He is the lamp through which God makes his *shabad* manifest. The Sikhs who appropriate the *shabad* turn to God. In the House of Guru Nanak and Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das is the ship for transporting human beings to the realm of liberation. The Sikhs who see him receive the gift of *jap*, *tap*, *sat* and *saṅtokh*. Guru Amar Das is the veritable form of God in the Kaliyuga. There is no other source of liberation. Guru Amar Das is the knight in shining armour who destroys the five adversaries of human beings : *kām*, *krodh*, *lobh*, *mob* and *haṅkā*. He is made the king of kings by Guru Nanak. His praise is beyond words.<sup>63</sup>

As we noticed earlier, the largest number of *savayyās* relate to Guru Ram Das. These were written by seven Bhaṭṭs. A certain degree of repetition of ideas and differences of emphasis may be expected *a priori*. Guru Ram Das received the *shabad* from Guru Amar Das and lodged God in his heart. He is a lake of immortality (*amrit sarovar*) that remains full all the time. Only the fortunate ones bathe in it. Guru Ram Das removes their fear and they attain the state of fearlessness (*anbhai pad*). His *saṅgat* is pure, and his praises

are sung in the world. Guru Ram Das is occupying the position of Guru Amar Das and Guru Angad, with the name as the source of liberation for all. Like Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das, *rāj-jog* is practised by Guru Ram Das. Received through God's grace this Janak-rāj is befitting for Guru Ram Das. By meeting him one acquires the merit of all *dharm* and *karm*. Both men and gods cherish his service. He is the veritable form of the limitless and fearless God. The throne of *Rāj-jog* is given to Guru Ram Das by God. Guru Nanak brought the light. He gave the treasure of *giān* to Guru Angad. By his touch, Guru Amar Das was enabled to redeem the honour in the Kaliyuga. When he was fully satisfied, Guru Amar Das gave the throne of *Rāj-jog* to Guru Ram Das. By turning to his feet, animals and ghosts are transformed into gods and men. There is no liberation without the Guru. The *sevak*s and Sikhs of Guru Ram Das always cherish his feet. Guru Amar Das made the true throne (*sachau takht*) firm and stable. The *saṅgat* of the Guru has appropriated the superior path (*uttam paṁth*) that leads to the state of fearlessness. Guru Ram Das is the master of an invincible army. 'The true Guru for all the four cosmic ages, you yourself are God'.<sup>64</sup>

Born in the house of Guru Ram Das, Guru Arjan recognized God through the Guru's instruction in his early life. Appropriating *bhagī-jog*, like Janak, he made the *shabad* manifest, and attained to high status by association with Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das as a *bhagat*. He lodged the *shabad* in his heart and Guru Ram Das introduced him to the Name. Through him, Guru Arjan met God. He has established *Satjug* through Janak-Rāj. Guru Nanak is present in Guru Arjan through Guru Ram Das, Guru Amar Das and Guru Angad. The touch of Guru Arjan transmutes base metals into gold. He is the remover of fear and suffering; he is the remover of illusion and the bestower of peace. He is absorbed in the *shabad* through the grace of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad and Guru Amar Das; made the

philosopher's stone by Guru Ram Das. He practises *rāj* in *jog*, and remains stable in *sahaj-jog*. God manifested Himself first through Guru Nanak and then through Guru Angad, Guru Amar Das and Guru Ram Das. His fifth form can now be seen in Guru Arjan. In the Kaliyuga, he is the ship to carry the world to liberation. His light shines in the sky and on the earth in all its nine *khaṇḍ*s. There is no difference between God and Guru Arjan.<sup>65</sup>

The Bhaṭṭs praise the Gurus. In this process, they underline the unity and continuity of the office of Guruship. They also underscore the unique importance of the message of the Gurus for the Kaliyuga. Along with the Gurus, the importance of the Name, the *shabad* and the *sangat* is emphasized. The idea that the Gurus and their followers treat the spiritual and temporal life as an integrated entity is hammered as *Rāj-jog*. All these aspects of the *savayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs have a close bearing on Sikh history, theology and ethics. They appear to sing of *halemi rāj*. It is not surprising that they find ample representation in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.

The *Sadd*, composed by Bābā Sunder, refers to the message received by Guru Amar Das about his departure from the world. The call was welcome to him. He called his kith and kin as well as the Sikhs to install Ram Das as the Guru personally. He told all the 'Sikhs, relations, sons and brothers' to fall at his feet, that is, to recognize him as the Guru. At the end he said that *kīrtan* should be performed after his death in place of the traditional *kīryā*. He gave the mark of *Guru-shabad*, the banner of truth, to Soḍhī Ram Das. His wish was accepted by the Sikhs. Guru Amar Das's son, Mohri, touched the feet of Guru Ram Das. He was followed by all others. If anyone was reluctant he was persuaded by Guru Amar Das to recognize Guru Ram Das. The whole world submitted to him. Three things stand out in the *Sadd*: Guru Amar Das got the divine message for departure (like Guru Nanak), he installed Ram Das in his place as the Guru,

and he commanded that no Brahmanical rites should be performed after his death. The relevance of all the three for the Sikh tradition is self-evident.<sup>66</sup>

#### 4. Promotion of *Halemī Rāj*

There is a good deal of diversity in the nature and character of the works included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. No single criterion would appear to explain the inclusion of the works other than those of the Gurus. The issue of the Bhagat Bāṇī has been discussed by scholars in isolation from the other works. Even under the label '*Bhagat*' we come upon three categories of contributors: the bhaktas associated with Vaishnavism, the *saṁts*, and the Sūfis. In the case of the first, only a few compositions are selected. And these few do not contain any specific Vaishnava element. The *saṁts* are not Vaishnava, and there is no Vaishnava element in the compositions of Kabir, Namdev and Ravidas. The ideas and attitudes expressed in their compositions are in general harmony with those of the Gurus, and they share concepts and idiom of expression. However, there are some important differences between them in terms of ideas and attitudes. Even more important is the difference in the scope of the ideology of these *Bhagats* and that of *Gurbāṇī*. For example, even Kabir who is fairly well represented in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* does not show the same degree of social and political awareness as Guru Nanak, and he shows no concern for institutionalization.

The case of Shaikh Farid is different from that of the *saṁts*. He is regarded as a Sūfi, like Bhikhan. The latter is called *Bhagat* Bhikhan and in his hymns there is nothing that can be identified as Sūfi or even Islamic. But Shaikh Farid is never called *Bhagat*: he is always *saikh* (Shaikh). His compositions make it absolutely clear that he is a Sūfi Muslim. He belongs to a system of religious beliefs and practices that is different from that of the Gurus, the *saṁts*

and the Vaishnava bhaktas. Despite some similarities of ideas, the unsaid suppositions remain basic. The compositions of Shaikh Farid do not get related to the theology and ethics of the Gurus in the same way as those of the *sants*. Shaikh Farid represented Islam, in a sense, at its best. As an interpretation of Islam, his compositions keep him within the orbit of Islam. The principle of inclusion in his case is not conformity to *Gurbānī* so much as the relative appreciation for a different tradition.

The case of the *Rāmkalī kī Vār* by Rai Balvand and Satta, the *Savayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs, and the *Sadd* is simple. The *Rāmkalī kī Vār* has a close bearing on the Sikh tradition and the *Savayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs have a close bearing on Sikh theology and ethics as well. The *Sadd* has a close bearing on succession and rites. All these could become the source of popular support for the Sikh movement.

If the selection of works other than the revealed word of the Gurus for the *Guru Granth Sāhib* cannot be understood in terms of a single principle or criterion, possibly, theology was not the only concern for including the Bhagat Bāṇī. The *Vār* of Balvand and Satta has a close bearing on the institution of Guruship and the status of Guru Nanak and his successors. The *Savayyās* of the Bhaṭṭs have a bearing on theology as well. The *Sadd* is relevant for Sikh institutions. However, the *Rāg Mālā* has no theological or religious significance. Its contents do not correspond to the *Rāgs* of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. It seems, therefore, that the common purpose of inclusion was to broaden the scope and strengthen the appeal of the dispensation of Guru Nanak and his successors. In other words, the principle of inclusion was the promotion of *halemī-rāj*.

## Notes and References

1. In the *paṭṭī* of Guru Nanak, all 35 letters of the Gurmukhi script are used in 35 verses. It is followed by the *Paṭṭī* of Guru Amar Das who uses the Gurmukhi letters and Guru Arjan uses Gurmukhi letters even in the *Bāvan-Akharī*. (*Ādi Śrī Guru Granth Sāhib*, pp. 250-62, 432-35). Guru Amar Das says that no words can express God's greatness. Guru Arjan glorifies the *akhar*: '*drishṭimān akh'ar hai jaitā, Nānak pārbrāhm nirlepā*'.
2. C. Shackle, *An Introduction to the Sacred Language of the Sikhs*, New Delhi: Heritage Publishers, 1999 (rpt.), Preface.
3. Sahib Singh, *Gurbānī Viākaraṇ*, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 1994 (10<sup>th</sup> impression), Preface to 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (1950).
4. *Ibid.*, Preface to 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (1970).
5. *Ibid.*, p. 21. Professor Sahib Singh gives examples of transitions. His work has been found helpful by scholars interested in the study of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.
6. Gurinder Singh Mann, *The Making of Sikh Scripture*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 101.
7. For a detailed analysis of the contents of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, see Bhai Joginder Singh Talwara, *Śrī Guru Granth Sāhib Bodh*, Part I, *Bānī Beorā*, Amritsar: Singh Brothers, 2004 (rpt.).
8. The significance of *Ghar* is not clear. The numbering used in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* ranges from 1 to 17, like *Ghar* 1, *Ghar* 2, *Ghar* 3 and so on. Professor Teja Singh suggests that this numbering was meant to indicate the tune (*tān*) or pitch (*sur*) in which the entire composition was to be sung. He also refers to the practice in Iranian music of indicating the tune as second (*do-gah*), third (*seh-gah*), fourth (*chahar-gah*) and so on. *Shabdārth Śrī Guru Granth Sāhib*, p. 14, note. Professor Gurinder Singh Mann takes notice of Professor Teja Singh's note and refers to Charan Singh's view that *ghar* indicates the variation of rhythm (*tāl*) in singing. Professor Mann adds: 'Sikh tradition seems to have forgotten *ghar*, and not much information is available about this category among present day Sikh musicians': *The Making of Sikh Scripture*, p. 91. Professor Pashaura Singh refers to the Iranian *tāls* plus *grahas* adapted by Amir Khusrau and also to Pincott's view. His own view is that *ghar* refers to 'melodic variation within the same *Rāg* pattern'. The *ghars* are 'musical clefs' according to which various *padās* are organized in the *Rāg* section. What is

- quite evident, the *ghar* had an important role in the actual performance. (*The Guru Granth Sāhib: Canon, Meaning and Authority*, pp. 144-5, 269).
9. Mann, *The Making of Sikh Scripture*, pp. 807-88.
  10. Pashaura Singh, *The Guru Granth Sāhib*, pp. 129, 130, 133, 134, 135, 145, 149.
  11. *Shabdārbh Sri Guru Granth Sāhib*, p. 1342.
  12. *Ibid.*, p. 414.
  13. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
  14. *Ibid.*, p. 311.
  15. *Ibid.*, p. 849.
  16. *Ibid.*, p. 950.
  17. *Ibid.*, p. 1087.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 1423.
  19. *Ibid.*, p. 642.
  20. *Ibid.*, p. 823.
  21. *Ibid.*, p. 849.
  22. *Ibid.*, p. 404.
  23. *Ibid.*, p. 1425.
  24. The formal headings given in the detailed content of the *Shabdārbh* do not cover all the headings. Their total number exceeds 50.
  25. Mann, *The Making of Sikh Scripture*, pp. 102-20.
  26. Pashaura Singh, *The Bbagats of Guru Granth Sāhib*, pp. 1-41.
  27. *Shabdārbh Sri Guru Granth Sāhib*, pp. 601, 1133, 1554-5.
  28. *Ibid.*, p. 67.
  29. *Ibid.*, p. 835.
  30. *Ibid.*, p. 995.
  31. *Ibid.*, pp. 1207-08.
  32. *Ibid.*, pp. 487-88.
  33. *Ibid.*, p. 1192.
  34. This statement is based on a paper, I have written on 'Bhagat Namdev of *Guru Granth Sāhib*' but not yet published.
  35. For this statement, J.S. Grewal, *Ideologies, Institutionalization, and Paribts: Kabir and Guru Nanak*, S.C. Misra Memorial Lecture, Indian History Congress, Mysore 2003.
  36. For this statement, J.S. Grewal, "Sant Ravidas", *Religious Movements and Institutions in Medieval India* (History of Science, Philosophy and Culture in Indian Civilization, Vol. VII, p. 2), ed., J.S. Grewal, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. 410-23.

37. For this statement, J.S. Grewal, "The Poetry of Shaikh Farid", *Lectures on History, Society and Culture of the Punjab*, Patiala : Punjabi University, 2007, pp. 41-73.
38. *Shabdārth Srī Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, p. 659.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 1293.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 487.
41. *Ibid.*, pp. 487-88.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 488.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 695.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 92, 525-26.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 526.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 695.
47. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
48. *Ibid.*, p. 974.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 858.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 695.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 695.
52. *Ibid.*, p. 526.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 1106.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 1195.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 1253.
56. Professor Gurinder Singh Mann has argued on the basis of extant manuscripts that the *Rāg Mālā* was not the last composition in the *Kartārpur Pothī* but the compositions which followed it were taken out later to make it conform to the *Ādi Granth*. The absence of the *Rāg Mālā* from the *Amritsar Pothī* suggests that the *Rāg Mālā* was added to the *Kartārpur Pothī* between 1604 and 1606. The fierce controversy about the continued inclusion of the *Rāg Mālā* in the *Ādi Granth* resulted in its exclusion from an edition published by Teja Singh of Bhasaur on the one hand, and a stronger defence of its inclusion on the other. (*The Making of Sikh Scripture*, pp. 66-68, 75-77, 120). Professor Pashaura Singh points out that the *Rāg Mālā* included in the *Ādi Granth* follows the *rāg-rāginī-putra* classification, accounting for a total number of 84 *Rāgs*. There is no such system in the *Ādi Granth*; all the major *Rāgs* appear under the same title of *Rāg* and nowhere under the title *Rāginī*. Only a fourth of the *Rāgs* and *Rāginīs* of the *Rāg Mālā* figure in the *Ādi Granth*. The exclusion of 63 *Rāgs* of the *Rāg Mālā* from the *Ādi Granth* underscores the difference. (*The Guru Granth Sāhib*, pp. 147-88).



57. *Shabdārth Sri Guru Granth Sāhib Jī*, pp. 966-67.
58. *Ibid.*, pp. 967-68.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 968.
60. *Ibid.*, p. 968.
61. *Ibid.*, pp. 1389-90.
62. *Ibid.*, pp. 1391-92.
63. *Ibid.*, pp. 1392-96.
64. *Ibid.*, pp. 1396-1406.
65. *Ibid.*, pp. 1406-09.
66. *Ibid.*, pp. 923-24.

## CHAPTER VI

# The Guru Eternal

The *Guru Granth Sāhib* stands distinguished from all other scriptures of the world for being regarded as the Guru, the sole successor of the ten Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, making Guruship a continuous institution ever since its inception and for ever in the future. Therefore, the making of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* becomes important in itself.

### 1. Early History

We referred earlier to a *Granth* compiled by Guru Arjan, 'the *Pothī* as the abode of God'. With the emergence of the doctrine of *Guru Granth* in the eighteenth century, Sikh writers began to comment on its history. In the twentieth century the subject became more important due to doubts raised about the authenticity or character of some of the contents of the *Granth*. Arguments began to be based on the extant manuscripts of the *Granth Sāhib*. In this process, some scholars doubted the authenticity of the original *Granth* in the possession of the Sodhī descendants of Dhir Mal at Kartarpur, known as the *Kartārpur Pothī*, *Kartārpurī Bīr*, or the *Ādi Bīr*. After much debate and discussion in recent decades the authenticity of the *Kartārpur Pothī* has been established.

In the *Ādi Bīr Bāre* (About the Original Recension), Professor Sahib Singh argued that the evidence of the *Granth Sāhib* and the *Purātan Janamsākhī* clearly showed that Guru Nanak himself had inscribed and preserved his entire *bāṇī*.

It came into the possession of Guru Angad who recorded his own *bāṇī* and passed it on to Guru Amar Das, together with the *bāṇī* of Guru Nanak. Following their example, Guru Amar Das added his own *bāṇī* to the record of Guru Ram Das who passed it on to Guru Arjan with his own *bāṇī* added to it. The *bāṇī* of 15 *Bhagats*, which is included in the *Granth Sāhib*, was also collected and recorded by Guru Nanak. The *Vār* of Satta and Balvand, about which some doubts were raised, was included in the *Kartārpur Pothī* in the lifetime of Guru Arjan. In Professor Sahib Singh's view the recension known after Banno, or the village Khārā Māṅgaṭ, was also prepared in the time of Guru Arjan under proper supervision, and the *ḡaltū bāṇīāṇ* (additional compositions) were added to the manuscripts of the *Granth Sāhib* by the followers of Handal (known as Handālis or Niranjaniās) after 1675. This was also the case of Mira Bai's *shabad* and the verses of Sur Das. All the arguments of Professor Sahib Singh were meant to affirm the authenticity of both the *Kartārpur Pothī* and the *Guru Granth Sāhib*.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Gurinder Singh Mann comes to the same conclusion but through a different route. He bases his arguments largely on the extant manuscripts. He argues that the collection of Guru Nanak's *bāṇī* made in the 1530s was represented in the earliest part of the *Guru Har Sahāi Pothī* (which was in the possession of the Soḡhis of Guru Har Sahai before it was stolen in the late twentieth century), either in the original form or its copy. The second stage in the history of the *Granth Sāhib* was represented by the *Goṇdvāl Pothīs* compiled by Guru Amar Das. Only two of those *Pothīs* are extant but G.S. Mann has argued that their number was actually four.<sup>2</sup> The recension known as MS 1245 is also accepted by G.S. Mann as authentic and placed around 1600, a few years before the compilation of the *Kartārpur Pothī*. These manuscripts explain the historical evolution of the contents and structure of the *Kartārpur Pothī*.<sup>3</sup> Some other

scholars, however, do not accept the authenticity of the manuscripts earlier than the *Kartārpur Pothī*.<sup>4</sup>

Professor Mann has examined over a score of extant manuscripts to suggest that the *Kartārpur Pothī* was at the fountainhead of the manuscripts of the seventeenth century. It began to be copied after its compilation in 1604. A copy was made in 1605 and taken to Peshawar where it served as a source for a branch of manuscripts, called branch 1 by G.S. Mann. The *Kartārpur Pothī* reached its final stage in 1606. A copy made before 1606 became the source for the second branch of manuscripts. By the mid 1660s, the scribes became aware of the hymns originally absent from the manuscripts of branch 1 and they began to add them to the copies they prepared. During the seventeenth century, both the branches of the copies of the *Kartārpur Pothī* were considered to be authoritative and carried signatures of the Gurus. The *Kānpur Pothī* (called also the *Bainno Bīr* or *Khārā Māṅgaṭ Bīr*) was copied in 1642 as a manuscript of branch 2. There is no evidence to place the *Kānpur Pothī* at the head of an independent branch of the seventeenth century manuscripts.<sup>5</sup>

Inscribed in 1674, MS 1192 in the Panjab University Library at Chandigarh contains the complete corpus of Guru Tegh Bahadur's hymns; its opening folio has a note to the effect that this manuscript was presented to Guru Tegh Bahadur for his signatures on the full moon day of Jeth in Sammat 1731 in the presence of the whole congregation. The manuscripts to which the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur were added in his lifetime belongs to the second branch of the *Kartārpur Pothī* manuscripts.<sup>6</sup>

The *Ādi Granth*, or the *Granth* authenticated by Guru Gobind Singh, was distinct from the MS 1192 version. A manuscript of 1682, followed by the ones inscribed in 1688, 1691 and 1692, clearly shows that the *Ādi Granth* was compiled in the pre-Khalsa phase of Guru Gobind Singh's life. This did not involve a simple addition of the hymns of

Guru Tegh Bahadur to the existing corpus. Some decisions seem to have been taken to drop a set of compositions available in the earlier manuscripts. It is clear, therefore, that the *Ādi Granth* was prepared finally under the authority of Guru Gobind Singh in the early 1680s at Makhawal-Anandpur.<sup>7</sup> The presence of the *Ādi Granth* manuscripts in the area of Takht Damdama suggests that its authentication was re-affirmed at Talwandi Sabo, equating the *Damdāmī Bīr* with the *Ādi Granth*.

According to Professor Mann, the extant manuscripts of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century fall into two groups: copies of the *Ādi Granth*, and a version of the branch 2 of the *Kartārpur Pothī* with hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur added to it. The variation between the two is not substantive, and most of the versions are completely identical with the *Ādi Granth*. This state of the manuscripts may largely be the result of the vesting of Guruship in the *Ādi Granth* by Guru Gobind Singh in 1708.

G.S. Mann observes that even before Guru Gobind Singh declared the *Ādi Granth* to be the Guru, the symbolic authority of the divine word had co-existed with the personal authority of the Guru. Guru Nanak's fundamental belief in the revealed nature of his compositions evolved along with the office of the Guru. The increased significance of these hymns is reflected in the position of Guru Amar Das who declares that *Gurbānī* is the light of the world. Guru Ram Das further emphasizes the liberating nature of the Guru's compositions. Guru Arjan believed that the revealed literature has the purpose of removing suffering of the world. The scriptural manuscripts acquired an authority of their own. Guru Arjan affirmed that the sacred text is the abode of God. In a manuscript of 1605, the Sikh scribe claims that the text he prepared manifests the body of Guru Nanak; presenting oneself before it would be equivalent to having an audience with him. The importance attached by Dhir Mal and Ram Rai to possession of the sacred text indicates that scriptural

text complemented the authority of the Gurus at the centre of the community. 'At the time of Guru Gobind Singh's death, then, we see the two strands of religious authority within the community coming together in a unique form. The symbolic role of the *Ādi Granth* expands to encompass the authority of the personal guru, as manifested in the new title, *Guru Granth Sāhib*, and the community as a whole (Guru Panth) takes up the authority to interpret the text.'<sup>8</sup>

Professor Mann underscores the historical role of the *Ādi Granth* as the principal source in defining Sikh theology and creating the ethical code by which the Sikhs live. They read, hear, and practise the message of the *Ādi Granth* which has made a deep impact on the devotional, ceremonial, ritual, intellectual and artistic dimensions of Sikh life. The Sikh *Gurdwāra* is literally the house of the *Ādi Granth*. In the opening decades of the eighteenth century the *Ādi Granth* enjoyed the status of living embodiment of the divine presence in the community, and the respect due to a personal Guru. Accompanied by symbols of royalty, the *Ādi Granth* constituted the court of the Guru. It played an important role in Sikh ceremonies ranging from naming the child to the rites of death. With the establishment of political supremacy of the Sikhs at the turn of the nineteenth century, the idea of a self-regulating Guru Panth receded and the *Ādi Granth* emerged as the sole symbolic centre of authority. In the 1850s, the *Ādi Granth* moved in to preside over the ceremony of marriage. The significance of the scripture in communal experience, thus, was revealed in multiplication of the sacred text, reading and recitation of the scripture at home and ceremonial purposes (giving rise to the practice of *akhaṇḍ pāṭh*, *saptāh pāṭh* and *khulā pāṭh*), and a tradition of formal reflection on the text.<sup>9</sup>

In his *Guru Gobind Singh's Death at Nanded: An Examination of Succession Theories*, Ganda Singh states his conclusion at the outset. Guru Gobind Singh died at Nanded on 6-7 October 1708 and was cremated there; he had not

appointed any of his followers as Guru, commanding his followers 'to look upon the Word of the Great Masters, as embodied in their holy book, the *Granth Sāhib*, as their Guru, thenceforth known as the *Guru Granth Sāhib*'.<sup>10</sup>

Among the early manuscripts for evidence on the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib* are the *Rabitnāmās* attributed to Bhāi Nand Lal, Bhāi Prahlad Singh, and Bhāi Chaupa Singh, Sainapat's *Srī Gur Sobhā* and *Gurbilās Chbevin Pātsbāhī* (on the assumption that it was written in 1718). From the second half of the eighteenth century are mentioned Koer Singh's *Gurbilās Pātsbāhī Das*, Kesar Singh Chhibber's *Baisāvalināmā Dasān Pātsbāhīān Kā*, Sarup Das Bhalla's *Mahimā Prakāsh*, and Sukha Singh's *Gurbilās Pātsbāhī Das*. For the first half of the nineteenth century, the evidence of Ratan Singh Bhangu is not taken into account on the argument that his work contains no reference to the Guru's last commandment about Guruship in the future. Bhāi Santokh Singh in his *Sūraj Prakāsh* places the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib* during the last days of Guru Har Krishan even though the nomination of 'the Bābā of Bakala' is also mentioned by him. The *Umdat ut-Twārikh* of Sohan Lal Suri, composed in the early nineteenth century but published later, and Ghulam Muhiyuddin alias Bute Shah's *Tārikh-i Punjāb* record the last commandment of the Guru regarding the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib*. The *Gurparnālī* of Gulab Singh, composed during the period of Sikh rule, also refers to Guruship for the *Granth Sāhib*, and so does the *Gurparnālī* of Kavi Gulab Singh, composed in 1841. Among the early British historians, J.D. Cunningham refers to the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib*. For the late nineteenth century, there are Ernest Trumpp, Syed Muhammad Latif, and M.A. Macauliffe, besides the *Bayān-i Khāndān-i Karmāt Nishān-i Bediān* by Munshi Sant Singh, the *Pothī Gurbilās* of Bawa Sumer Singh and the *Pañth Prakāsh* and the *Twārikh-i Guru Khālsā* of Giāni Gian

Singh. For the twentieth century, there are the works of Bhāi Kahn Singh of Nabha.<sup>11</sup>

Dr. Ganda Singh marshalled all this evidence on the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib* in order to show that the later claims of individuals to Guruship were without any justification. He mentions a number of such 'religious pretenders'. The most important among them were the Nāmdhāris. Dr. Ganda Singh gives quotations from the letters of Bābā Ram Singh to prove that he believed in the authority of *Guru Granth Sāhib* which he recommends strongly to his followers for various purposes. 'The *Guru Granth Sāhib* alone is to be recognized as the visible body of the Gurus', says Bābā Ram Singh in one of his letters. In another letter he says, 'after the Ten Gurus, Mahārāj ji (Guru Gobind Singh) has installed the *Guru Granth Sāhib* as the Guru who is permanent for all times. There is no other Guru'. Bhāi Kala Singh Nāmdhārī published his *Singhān Nāmdhārīān dā Shāhid Bilās* and his *Singhān Nāmdhārīān dā Panth Prakāsh*, in 1913 and 1914; he refers to the *Granth Sāhib* respectfully as *Guru Granth*. However, the Nāmdhārī publicists, Alam and Chakarvarti, tried to build up the Guruship of Bābā Balak Singh and Bābā Ram Singh in succession to Guru Gobind Singh. In this story, Bābā Ajapal Singh of Nabha is presented as Guru Gobind Singh on the argument that Guru Gobind Singh did not die in 1708. Apart from contemporary and later evidence on the death of Guru Gobind Singh, Dr. Ganda Singh presents evidence on the point that Bābā Ajapal Singh was actually a follower of Guru Gobind and Bābā Balak Singh had received *gur-mantar* from Sain Sahib Bhagat Jawahir Mall. Bābā Partap Singh, who was the head of Nāmdhārī establishment from 1906 to 1959, denied that he regarded himself as Guru but admitted that his followers insisted that he was.<sup>12</sup> There is no credible evidence to support the claim of the Nāmdhāris to personal Guruship in continuation from Guru Gobind Singh. The evidence for the end of personal Guruship with the death



of Guru Gobind Singh and the vesting of Guruship in the *Granth Sāhib* is strong and overwhelming.

## 2. The *Guru Granth* in Relation to the Guru Panth

Dr. Ganda Singh's primary concern left out the issue that Guruship was vested in the Khalsa as well as the *Granth Sāhib*. We may examine the precolonial Sikh literature on this point. In the process, we may be better able to appreciate the doctrine of *Guru Granth*.

The *Rahitnāmā* of Bhāi Nand Lal was composed before the institution of the Khalsa in 1699. In this *Rahitnāmā*, Guru Gobind Singh is presented as saying that the Guru has three forms : *nirgun*, *sargun* and *Gurshabad*. In the first form the Guru is without any attributes and nothing can be affirmed about him except his existence. The Sikh who wants to have the Guru's *darshan*, should see *Granth Jī* which, without the slightest doubt, is the visible form of the Guru. The third form of the Guru is the Sikh who is immersed in *Gurbānī*, trusts the Guru's *shabad* and has its *darshan* every morning. The *nirgun* form comes close to Guru Nanak's conception of God as the Guru, and the *sargun* and *Gurshabad* forms are close to Guru Ram Das's equation of *bānī* with the Guru and his bracketing of the Sikh with the Guru. The use of *Granth Jī* in place of *bānī* can be appreciated in the light of the fact that Guru Gobind Singh had prepared authenticated copies of the *Ādi Granth* in the 1680s and 1690s. Therefore, one could have *Granth Jī's darshan*, read it, hear it, and reflect on it.<sup>13</sup>

Sainapat's statement in *Srī Gur Sobhā* neatly links up the seventeenth century position with that of the early eighteenth. According to him, a day before his death, the Singhs asked Guru Gobind Singh what would be his form, and he replied that the Khalsa was his form. 'My concern

is with the *khālas* and I have bequeathed my physical form to the *khālas*'. The *khālas* is he who has no illusion (*bhram*) in his mind. He is 'our true Guru'. 'Our true Guru' is the limitless and eternal *shabad*, the *bānī* that brings in the gift of liberation.<sup>14</sup> This declaration is the basis of the doctrines of Guru Panth and *Guru Granth*.

Two early *Rahitnāmās* are silent on the point of Guruship: the *Tankhānāmā* and the *Sākhī Rahit Kī*, both attributed to Bhāi Nand Lal. About the former, it has been argued that it was composed between the institution of the Khalsa in 1699 and the death of Guru Gobind Singh in 1708.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the vesting of Guruship in the Khalsa or the *Granth* is not expected to figure in it. The latter too was probably composed in this phase. Another *Rahitnāmā*, the *Prem Sumārg*, which appears to have been started during the lifetime of Guru Gobind Singh and completed soon after his death, refers to *Shabad-Bānī* as the Guru. He who wishes to hear the Guru should read the *shabad*. He who wishes to see the Guru should see the Khalsa with respect and trust.<sup>16</sup>

In the *rahit* part of the *Chaupā Singh Rahit-Nāmā*, which appears to be earlier than the narrative part, there is a reference to *Granth Sāhib* without the epithet Guru but there is also the statement that the *shabad* of the *Granth Sāhib* should be regarded as Guru by the Sikhs. Indeed, the injunction to regard *Granth Sāhib* as the Guru is also there. In the *tankhā* part, there is a reference to *Guru Granth Sāhib*. At the same time, Guru Gobind Singh is stated to have given Guruship to the Khalsa in his lifetime, declaring that the *Sarbat Saṅgat* is his Khalsa, and Khalsa is the Guru. God is in the *Sarbat*; to see the *Sarbat* is to see the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh himself had said that he remained present in the *Saṅgat*. Therefore, regard the *Sarbat Saṅgat* as the Guru. In another situation, Guru Gobind Singh says that Guruship is vested in *Sarbat Khalsa*, with the support of the Guru's *shabad* and the protection under *Akāl Purkh*. It is further

explained that not an individual but the *Sarbat* are Guru Khalsa. Thus, we find that both the ideas are crystallizing.<sup>17</sup>

In the *Rabītnāmā* of Bhāi Prahlād Singh, which can be placed early in the eighteenth century, the Pañth is made manifest in accordance with the command of *Akāl Purkh*, and Guru Khalsa is the manifest body of the Guru. At the same time, all the Sikhs are commanded to regard the *Granth* as the Guru.<sup>18</sup> The view held by some scholars that the doctrine of Guru Pañth became prevalent earlier than the doctrine of *Guru Granth* is clearly not tenable.<sup>19</sup>

In the second half of the eighteenth century, Koer Singh in his *Gurbilās Pāṭshāhī* 10 refers to Guru Khalsa and Guru Pañth, and emphasizes that the Khalsa should be served like father and mother and the Guru rolled into one. At the same time, the Sikh of the Guru should regard *Guru Granth* as God and there is no other Guru equal to it. Guru Gobind Singh himself bowed to it as the Guru. The *Sarbat Saṅgat* is the Guru's form and he is always present in it. The Sikhs should have complete trust in *Guru Granth*.<sup>20</sup>

As in Sainapat's *Srī Gur Sobhā*, in Kesar Singh Chhibber's *Baṁsāvalīnāmā Dasān Pāṭshāhīān kā*, the Sikhs ask Guru Gobind Singh on the last day of his life how they would do without him, and the Guru replies '*Granth* is the Guru, take refuge in *Akāl*. The Guru is Khalsa and the Khalsa is Guru'. Chhibber says that 'our Guru is *Granth Sāhib*' and the Sikhs should live in accordance with its commands. Guruship was vested in the *Granth Sāhib* by Guru Gobind Singh and Chhibber refers to it as *Guru Granth Sāhib*. 'Today clearly our Guru is *Granth Sāhib*.' He who deviates from its injunctions is a loser. Now *Granth Sāhib* as the Guru provides answers to all questions, like Guru Gobind Singh in his lifetime. Not to follow its instruction is to become a renegade (*bemukh*). Follow no instruction other than that of the *Granth Sāhib* and that of Guru Gobind Singh.<sup>21</sup>

Kesar Singh Chhibber is the first and the only Sikh writer of the eighteenth century to talk of two *Granth*s in

connection with Guruship. Therefore, his statement deserves to be closely examined. Both *Granth Sāhibs*, he says, are real brothers. One is the elder, and the other younger. The former was born in 1601 and the latter in 1698. When the Sikhs made the request that the latter (*Chhoṭā Granth*) may be combined with the former (*Ādi Granth*), the Guru made it clear that the *Ādi Granth Sāhib* was really the Guru; the other was his sport (*kheḍ*). Though it was dear to him, the Guru did not combine his *Granth* with the *Ādi Granth*. Chhibber himself adds that the two *Granth Sāhibs* were brothers and should be regarded as Guru. Evidently, Chhibber is not making a factual statement. He is advocating the cause of Guru Gobind Singh's *Granth* for an equal status with the *Ādi Granth*.<sup>22</sup> That this was not the view of others is evident from their silence with regard to any *Granth* other than the *Ādi Granth*. Chhibber's advocacy clarifies that *Granth* or *Granth Sāhib* was used for the *Ādi Granth* as *Guru Granth Sāhib*.

In Sarup Das Bhalla's *Mahimā Prakāśh*, when the Sikhs ask Guru Gobind Singh whom they should see after him, he replies 'Now, regard *Granth Sāhib* as the Guru in my place'. They who wish to converse with me should read the *Ādi Granth Sāhib*. Thus, in place the ten Gurus upto Guru Gobind Singh, the *Ādi Granth* became the Guru. Though Sarup Das Bhalla says that Guru Gobind Singh adopted the same appearance as that of the baptized Singhs, he does not equate the Khalsa with the Guru.<sup>23</sup> Evidently he is more indifferent to the idea of Guru Panth than Kesar Singh Chhibber who equates the Khalsa and the Guru at least once.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, Sukha Singh in his *Gurbilās Pātsbhāhī 10* does not refer to *Guru Granth*. He refers only to the *Pothī Granth* and emphasizes that the Khalsa should not listen to anything else. However, he recommends also the *bāṇī* of the ten Gurus. Before his death, Guru Gobind Singh tells the Khalsa that they are entrusted to *Akāl Purkh* but there is no reference to the vesting of

Guruship in the Khalsa or the *Granth*. However, the Guru is in the *sangat* and in five Singh. The *Sangat* and the Guru are the same. In connection with the creation of the Khalsa, the five volunteers who are baptized by the Guru are asked in turn to baptize him in the same way. When they are reluctant to undertake such an unusual task, Guru Gobind Singh explains to them that the Khalsa represent the eternal Guru.<sup>24</sup> Thus, if Sarup Das Bhalla is indifferent to the idea of Guru Panth, Sukha Singh takes it to the highest level in his own way.

Early in the 1840s, Ratan Singh Bhangu does not refer to the situation at the end of Guru Gobind Singh's life, nor, therefore, to the vesting of Guruship in the Panth or the *Granth*. However, Bhangu is emphatic that no individual was acknowledged as Guru by the Khalsa after the death of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhāi Taru Singh tells Zakariya Khan that 'Guru is the Khalsa and Khalsa is the Guru'. This was proclaimed by Guru Gobind Singh himself. There is no difference whatever between the Guru and the Khalsa. The phrase Guru Khalsa is also used. Similarly, Bhangu refers to *Sri Guru Granth* or *Granth Sāhib* too.<sup>25</sup> Thus, there is hardly any doubt that Ratan Singh subscribed to both the doctrines. Rather, he took them for granted.

In one situation Ratan Singh Bhangu shows the relative importance and significance of the two doctrines. A Brahman comes to the 'court' of the Khalsa at Amritsar with the request for help against the Pathans of Kasur who had forcibly taken away his wife. Hari Singh (Bhangi) told him to come on the day following when the *diwān* of the Khalsa was to be held. The Brahman came again and said that he would kill himself if the Khalsa did not redress the wrong done to him by the Pathans. Hari Singh asked the Singhs present to offer their views. They suggested that it was important to keep in view the strength of the Khalsa in comparison with the Pathans of Kasur. At this time, half of the Dal Khalsa was not in Amritsar. Hari Singh commanded 5,000 men and the other

four *misl*s present commanded no more than 8,000 men in all. The Pathans were believed to be 12 lacs and to possess 12 fortresses, with moats around their walls and effective artillery within. They had withstood the forces of the Marathas and Ahmad Shah Abdali. The Khalsa were unlikely to succeed against them. But Hari Singh insisted that the Khalsa must attack Kasur even if they perished in the attempt. The others suggested that they should wait for the rest of the Dal. In this stalemate, Charhat Singh suggested that the true Guru had perhaps sent the Brahman to give the Khalsa an opportunity to subjugate the Pathans. Therefore, they should seek order from the *Guru Granth Sāhib* in the Darbār (Harimaṇdar Sāhib). The Kanhaiyās, the Rāmgarhiās and the Nakkais also liked this suggestion. The Khalsa go to the Darbār and supplicate with folded hands : 'You *Guru Granth* are the body of the Guru; give the right order (*vāk*) to the *saṅgat*'. Then the *Guru Granth* is opened for the order and it shows the hymn of Guru Arjan, in the *Basant kī Vār* with the line '*pañje badhe mahābalī kar sachchā dhoā*'. The Khalsa are happy to hear the order. Shouting the slogan of 'Guru's victory', they march against Kasur. They hear of the indifferent state of defence in Kasur from a Sikh of the town, and feel convinced that the *Guru Granth Sāhib* had created this opportunity for them. They resolve to destroy the Pathans before plundering the town. All this was done, and the Brahman's wife was restored to the Brahman.<sup>26</sup> Thus, Ratan Singh Bhangu, who gives greater importance to Guru Pañth and *Gurmatās* than any other Sikh writer, looks upon the superior authority of *Guru Granth Sāhib* as built into the practice of taking *vāk*. It is open to the Khalsa to interpret the *Guru Granth* and to take collective decisions which are authoritative but their authority does not transcend the authority of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. The doctrines of Guru Pañth and *Guru Granth* are two sides of the same coin, with the latter as the obverse.

### 3. The Case of the *Dasam Granth*

Some scholars have asserted that both the *Ādi Granth* and the *Dasam Granth* were regarded as Guru and placed at par with each other. They generally refer to the statements of the early European writers who underline the importance of the *Dasven Pātsbhāh Kā Granth* for the Sikhs in the early nineteenth century and draw the inference that both the *Granth*s were regarded as Guru. Much is made of the statements of John Malcolm in this respect. The best representative of this view is Harjot Oberoi who states that the Khalsa placed the *Ādi Granth* and the *Dasam Granth* at par. Both the scriptures were present in meetings of the Khalsa as a body and received equal veneration. John Malcolm is quoted on this point. Oberoi talks of the 'pervasive impact' of the *Dasam Granth*. Bābā Ram Singh, the leader of the Nāmdhāris in the nineteenth century, is presented as treating the two scriptures at par. Gradually, however, the *Dasam Granth* was 'eased out of Sikh rituals' and by the early twentieth century it 'no longer enjoyed the textual hegemony it once enjoyed'. The new orthodoxy subscribed solely to the Guruship of the ten Gurus and the *Ādi Granth*.<sup>27</sup>

In the evidence presented by Harjot Oberoi there is no indication that the *Dasam Granth* was regarded as 'Guru'. Malcolm nowhere talks of Guruship of any *Granth*. His silence on this point was due to the lack of information.<sup>28</sup> J.D. Cunningham, with more Sikh evidence available to him, talks of both the *Ādi Granth* and *Dasven Pātsbhāh Kā Granth*, gives due importance to the latter, but refers only to the Khalsa and the *Ādi Granth* as having been declared to be Guru. He was familiar with the *Rahitnāmā* attributed to Prahlad Rai.<sup>29</sup>

We can see that from the death of Guru Gobind Singh to the beginning of colonial rule in the Punjab there was

no conflict or tension between the doctrine of *Guru Granth* and the doctrine of Guru Panth, and the *Dasam Granth* was nowhere in the picture in relation to Guruship. The personal, social and religious life of the Sikhs was influenced by the *Guru Granth Sāhib* throughout this period in a way that is unthinkable in the case of the *Granth* attributed to Guru Gobind Singh. In fact, very little is known of the *Dasam Granth* during this period. Its influence appears to have been highly exaggerated on the basis of general but vague impressions.

The view that the doctrine of Guru Panth was relegated to the background during the early nineteenth century is based on the assumption that it was more important than the doctrine of *Guru Granth* during the eighteenth century. Also, there is a little misconception of the doctrine of *Guru Panth*. Primarily, the doctrine asserted that the Khalsa Panth collectively, and not an individual Sikh, is the Guru. Secondly, the authority of the collectivity is all important in relation to an individual. Thirdly, the principle of equality among the Khalsa is strongly built into the doctrine.

A democratic institutionalization of the doctrine is assumed whereas it could possibly become the basis of democratic institutionalization. The moral force of *Gurmatās* and the concerted action of the Dal Khalsa can certainly be better appreciated in the light of the doctrine of Guru Panth. The authority of the collectively and its partial institutionalization also found tangible expression in the oral instructions or *bukamnāmās* issued from the Akāl Takht by the Guru Khalsa. One such *bukamnāmā* is extant. It was issued by *Sat Sri Akāl Purkh Ji kā Khālsā* in 1759 to Bhāi Aya, Miha Singh, Bhāi Mahbub and the *sarbat* (*sarigat*) of Patna who are asked to send Rs. 125 as their share of contribution towards the (repairs or reconstruction of) Sri Harimandar. All the Sikhs of Patna are not Singhs; they are greeted with *Vābeguru jī kī fateh*, the Khalsa at Amritsar (Akāl Takht) are referred to as 'Guru Khalsa'. The inscription



on the seal can be read as *Akāl Sabāi Khālsā Jī*.<sup>30</sup> The contemporary Sikh leaders, who were in authority, used their own personal names instead of 'Khalsa Jī' in their seals with *Akāl Sabāi*.<sup>31</sup> The Sikh leader was exercising political authority in a given territory in the name of *Akāl Purkh*, the 'Guru Khalsa' of *Akāl Purkh* were exercising authority that was neither territorial nor political in the strict sense of the term.

It is important to underline that the doctrine of Guru Panth was not institutionalized in democratic terms but it was institutionalized nonetheless in the sense that authority was exercised from the Akāl Takht on behalf of the Khalsa or in the name of the Khalsa. John Malcolm and J.D. Cunningham emphasize the importance of the authority exercised by the Akālīs of the Akāl Takht in the late eighteenth and the early nineteenth century. Even when the control of the Akāl Takht and the Harimaṇdar Sāhib was taken over by the British in the name of the Sikhs, the custodians of the Akāl Takht, which was regarded as the national baptistery of the Sikhs, continued to issue *bukamnāmās* from time to time. This function was given to the Jathedar of Akāl Takht after the Harimaṇdar Sāhib complex was taken over by the Shiromaṇi Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) in 1920. Sanctified by the authority of the SGPC as the symbolic representative of Guru Panth, the practice has continued after the Sikh Gurdwaras Act of 1925. Seen in this light, the idea of Guru Panth has never become defunct ever since 1708 and it has never become so important as the doctrine of *Guru Granth*. What is more important to underline, the doctrines of *Guru Granth* and Guru Panth are complementary, and they are based on the same ideology.

#### 4. Dialogue with Others

As we noticed in the 'Introduction', the relevance of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* for interfaith dialogue has been emphasized

by scholars. We may cite a few examples. In a paper entitled "*Guru Granth Sāhib* and Interfaith Dialogue," Professor Gurnam Kaur emphasizes that *Guru Granth Sāhib* opens the way for interfaith dialogue by including the hymns of Hindu *Bhagats* and Muslim Sūfi poets which have ideological similarities with *Gurmat*. She looks upon the compositions like the *Siddh Gost* and *Oankār* as examples of interfaith dialogue. The way suggested in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* for all human beings is to remember Gōd's Name, to earn one's livelihood through honest means, and share one's earnings with the needy. This is the best way for the emancipation of all humanity.<sup>32</sup>

In a paper entitled "*Guru Granth Sāhib*: As a Precursor of Inter-Faith Understanding," Professor Kirpal Singh emphasizes that the *Guru Granth Sāhib* alone recognizes all religious dispensations as capable of elevating the human soul. The *jagat jalandā* verse of Guru Amar Das and the *koi bole Rām Rām koi Khudāe* of Guru Arjan indicate that the awareness of inner unity amidst apparent diversity is the cornerstone of interfaith understanding. One of the core messages of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is that all religions offer different ways to attain spirituality. Guru Arjan included the compositions of certain medieval *Bhagats* even though their views in some matters of detail do not tally with those of the Gurus. The Holy *Granth* is 'the only inter-communal book in India if not in the world'. Guru Nanak explains to Muslims what is meant to be 'a Musalmān' and to Hindus how they could find the way to their religion. Guru Nanak stressed the equality of mankind and the Sikh Gurus admitted followers without any distinction of caste or creed; the so-called low people joined in large numbers and even Muslims were freely admitted and honoured.<sup>33</sup>

In a paper entitled 'Sikh Attitude towards Religious Pluralism', Professor Dharm Singh states that pluralism treats all the religions of the world as historical manifestations of one ultimate Supreme Reality. Religious pluralism is not

confined to the knowledge of other religious systems. Their claim to truth has also to be regarded as valid. Unlike Islam and Christianity, Sikh religion does not represent a missionary tradition. It can play a very crucial and constructive role in the present because of its pluralist theology. The Sikh scripture stands for respect for all religions and cooperation among different religious communities. The Sikh scripture gives much importance to dialogue. That Guru Nanak was revered by both Hindus and Muslims, that Guru Arjan accepted both Muslims and Hindus as his followers, and that Guru Tegh Bahadur gave his life for religious freedom are seen as supporting the view presented.<sup>34</sup>

Though all the evidence adduced is not relevant and all the arguments are not cogent, the need for interfaith dialogue is stressed and the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is seen as exceptionally relevant for interfaith dialogue.

In our understanding, Guru Nanak and his successors present a distinct dispensation. Implicit in much of what they say, this claim is made more or less explicit by all of them. The contemporary social order for Guru Nanak is unjust, oppressive and discriminatory. Both caste and creed become the basis of discrimination and indirect or direct oppression. Apart from infringement of the principle of equality, there are practices based on false assumptions, which at best are useless and often socially harmful. Guru Nanak identifies himself with the oppressed and the unprivileged. He does not approve of any of the known religious systems and he identifies himself only with the true devotees of God who are bracketed with his followers. Guru Nanak's social, political and religious ideas are reiterated by his successors. They claim their conception of God to be different from that of others and their theology is intimately linked with their conception of God. Their idea of liberation-in-life is also different and gets related to matters social and political. With the passage of time, a new social order comes into existence

as a distinct entity with its own ideology, institutions, and organization, resulting in an order that is parallel to the state. The terms 'we', 'us' and 'our' appear in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* as markers of a new identity. The relevant question to ask, therefore, is what Guru Nanak and his successors thought of those who remained outsiders, 'others'.

We have noticed already that Guru Nanak and his successors talk of the one common humanity of all men and women of the world. It is stressed again and again that all human beings are creation of the One; His light shines in them all; no human being can be regarded as low or bad; he who regards himself low is actually high. The statement is explicitly made that God is 'our common father'. He alone is the father and all human beings are his progeny. Therefore, there are no high or low among them. Indeed, the one who has seen the divine light in all regards other as higher than oneself. One should identify oneself with the low.<sup>35</sup> The idea of universal fraternity springing from the fatherhood of God enables Guru Nanak and his successors to accept followers irrespective of caste, creed or gender. They are also able to evolve institutions on the basis of the idea of equality. However, this idea remains more relevant for the formation of the new order than for those who remain outside. What is relevant for others is the possible concern arising out of the conviction that they are equally the children of God.

In the larger dispensation of God, all religious traditions of the world are covered by the Divine Order. Guru Nanak refers to two ways which for him are alike; to regard others as infidel is an act of disbelief; created by God the whole world is wonderful; the one who gets rid of the self finds the divine door.<sup>36</sup> To appropriate what belongs to others is a taboo for all alike, whether Hindu or Muslim; neither a *guru* nor a *pīr* intercedes for one who eats ill-gotten food.<sup>37</sup> Guru Nanak refers to all categories of Muslims who pray to God in the hope of His blessings: *pīrs* and prophets, mystics and martyrs, the *shaiḳhs* and the *mullās*, the *qāzīs* and the

*darveshes*.<sup>38</sup> The *pīrs*, prophets, and mystics are bracketed with gods, *jogīs*, and all kinds of renunciants who are in search of God.<sup>39</sup> The *bbānā* of God covers not only temporal but also spiritual pursuits. 'If it pleases you one plays on instruments and sings; if it pleases you one bathes at a place of pilgrimage; if it pleases you one smears one's body with ashes and blows the horn (*singī*); if it pleases you, one reads books and is called *mullā* or *shaikh*'.<sup>40</sup> At one level, thus, people worship God in different ways in accordance with His will. It is for God to show them the right path.

A certain degree of appreciation for their own systems is built into the message given to the *mullā* and the *jogī*. He who makes the world blossom is *Maulā* (God), the wonderful Lord who creates living beings from earth (*kbāk*) and water (*āb*). Whatever is created is subject to destruction. The *mullā* is reminded that he too is bound to die; he should be afraid of God. 'You are a *mullā* or a *qāzī* only if you really recognize your God (Khudā)'. He alone is a real *qāzī* who abandons the self and his sole support is the Name of God, the true creator who is and shall be for ever.<sup>41</sup> This advice makes even more sense when seen in the light of the *Qu'rānic* verse which says that everything will perish except the face of God (Allah). An understanding of Islam enables Guru Nanak to address the *mullā* in a language which he understands and in terms of ideas which he cherishes. The *mullā* or the *qāzī* can become a real Musalmān by cherishing the way of God's friends (*auliyā*), and cleaning the mirror of his heart (to see the image of God reflected in it). To be a real Musalmān he should follow the path shown by the guide and become indifferent to life and death. He should accept the will (*razā*) of God (*Rabb*), recognizing the power of the Omipotent and abandon the self. He should be kind to all to become a real Musalmān.<sup>42</sup> To fully appreciate these verses we have to have a fair understanding of the *Qur'ān* and Islamic mysticism.

The inclusion of Bhagat Bāṇī in *Guru Granth Sāhib* can

be appreciated in terms of general validity and relative appreciation. As Guru Nanak says, for Muslims to regard others as infidels is to betray their own disbelief in divine dispensation. Validity of Islam is recognized with or without relative appreciation. Shaikh Farid's religious poetry in the *Guru Granth Sāhib* can be seen by the Gurus as an expression of the Islamic tradition at its best. It is not a part of the Sikh tradition but nonetheless respectable. Though the ideas and attitudes of the *saints* and the *bhagats* included in the *Guru Granth Sāhib*, generally, are not opposed to the ideas and attitudes of the Gurus, they are not seen by the Gurus as 'predecessors'. Their position is essentially the same as that of Shaikh Farid. If they have become an integral part of the Sikh tradition now, so has Shaikh Farid. That there were paths other than the path of Guru Nanak which could lead to liberation is equally evident from the attitude of Guru Nanak and his successors towards the *bhagats* of myth and legend. Guru Nanak's dispensation is not the only one but it is more efficacious than any other for the modern age.

However, the adoption of Guru Nanak's path is voluntary. No coercion or earthly inducement is thought of to bring others to this path. The principle of the freedom of conscience is built into Guru Nanak's criticism of discrimination. He regrets that gods and temples are taxed by the contemporary state. These gods and temples are not his gods and temples. They stand clearly rejected. Discrimination on the basis of difference in beliefs and practices is an infringement of the Divine Order. All human beings have and should have the right to freedom of belief, even if that belief appears to be wrong. Guru Tegh Bahadur, whose martyrdom can be seen as a concrete expression of this principle of freedom, enunciates that none should frighten others, just as none should be afraid of others. Like God, a liberated individual is devoid of enmity (*nirvair*) as much as he is devoid of fear (*nirbhau*).

Finally, the aim of the true devotee of God is to acquire His attributes. Welfare of others, *parupkār*, is built into the idea of God's grace. God is called *parupkārī*, especially when he graciously bestows the Name, the gift of all gifts. The *parupkārī* Guru has given the Name, says Guru Ram Das. For Guru Arjan, all his predecessors are *parupkārī*, like God. The Sikh of the Guru serves all. The service of the Sikh is not confined to the Sikhs. Thus, when Guru Nanak says that one finds a place in the divine court through service of God, this service can be seen as covering service of the Guru, service of the Sikhs, and service of others. A genuine concern for the welfare of human beings is an integral part of the Sikh faith embodied in *Guru Granth Sāhib*. The *jagat jalāndā* verse of Guru Amar Das is a trenchant expression of this concern.<sup>43</sup>

The idea of *parupkār* has remained operative in Sikh history. What the Gurus have done, and what the best of their followers have done, becomes relevant for interfaith interaction, just as the *Guru Granth Sāhib* is relevant for interfaith dialogue.

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  36. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
  37. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
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## CHAPTER VII

# Thus Speaks the Guru

All *Gurbānī* is equally sacred. However, there are some compositions which are read or recited more often than the others and on various occasions and for different purposes. These compositions have a historical importance of their own. We propose to talk about the first part of the *Guru Granth Sāhib* which is commonly called 'liturgical'. Together with this, we propose to talk about the *Āsā dī Vār*, the *Anand*, the *Lāvān*, and the *Sukhmanī*, all of which are the most familiar compositions of the Gurus.

### 1. *Japujī*

Literally at the head of all these compositions is the *Japujī*, placed at the beginning of the *Guru Granth Sāhib*. It is meant to be recited every morning by every Sikh, man or woman. Regarded as the most important expression of Guru Nanak's theology, it is regarded as one of 'the foremost' religious compositions of the world leading men and women on the spiritual path for 'total absorption in God-consciousness'. Its essential purpose is to bridge the gulf between human beings and God by demolishing the wall of falsehood.

The *Japujī* follows the *mūlmanṭar*, which refers to the unity of the Supreme Being as a transcendent entity or Truth. The opening *paurī* of the *Japujī* underscores this essential character, the Supreme Being existing before the beginning of time, through all the cosmic ages, and in the present, and to remain in existence when there is nothing else. Identification with this True Being and living in accordance

with the divine ordinance (*hukam, razā*) is the objective of human life. This is how the wall of falsehood is demolished. The divine ordinance, therefore, is of fundamental importance.

Human beings sing of the greatness of the Supreme Being but only inadequately. By reflecting on His eternal Name and His greatness early in the morning through His gift of love one may find the door to liberation through His grace, and realize that only the True One is everything. He is self-existent. Only by serving Him through singing his praises in awe one may attain peace (*sukh*) through the Guru. The Supreme Being can never be described. The important thing is to remember Him as the only bestower of all gifts. Nothing can be achieved without His grace. The highest spiritual exaltation is made possible by listening to the praises of the Supreme Being and reflection on the Name to destroy all suffering and sin. The person who has appropriated the Name sees the Supreme Being in the entire creation. He grasps the essence of *dharm* and does not follow any of the established paths. Nonetheless, he attains liberation. He gets recognition in this world as well as in the divine court.

The physical and moral universe in all its multitudinous forms has been created by the divine ordinance. The power of the Supreme Being cannot be described. The mortal beings are nothing in comparison with the everlasting Formless One. What pleases Him is good. He is worshipped in innumerable ways but only that which pleases Him is good. There are millions of false, ignorant and depraved sinners in His creation. There is no word or numeral appropriate for the whole creation. All His creation is His *nām*; there is no place without the Name and there is no place beyond it. Sins are washed away through the Name. One who appropriates and follows the Name with love, bathes in the inner *tīrath*, the divine presence within human beings. This happens through God's grace.

The known scriptures of the world (*Ved* and *Kateb*) have described the greatness of the Supreme Being but only He knows His greatness. There is no limit of any kind in relation to Him. Great is the Lord and high His place. To know Him one has to be as high, which is impossible. Only He knows how great He is! All gifts are the result of His grace and there is no limit to His grace. It is His pleasure to liberate or to keep one chained (to the wheel of death and rebirth); none else has any say in this matter. He who receives the gift of His praises is the king of kings. No praise is adequate for His greatness. He can become as great as He pleases. Any pretention to know His greatness is the height of ignorance.

The earth is a *dharmśāl*, a place to cultivate *dharm*. True justice is done in the court of the True One. Recognition is given to the true devotees. The true and the false stand distinguished. This is the realm of *dharm* (*dharm khaṇḍ*). The other four *realms*, those of *giān*, *sarm*, *karm* and *sachch*, are described in the last four *paurīs* of the *Japujī*. Generally interpreted in terms of ascent towards a higher spiritual state, the five *khaṇḍ*s are related to the conception of the goal and the means of liberation-in-life. The *Japujī* ends with a *shalok* of Guru Angad which, according to Professor Sahib Singh, expresses the essential principle of the *Japujī*.

Significantly, there are comments on the contemporary situation in the *Japujī*. The representatives of three religious traditions are mentioned: the *Pandit* representing the Brahmanical tradition, the *jogī* representing the ascetical tradition, and the *qāzī* representing the Islāmic tradition. These three traditions provide the frame of reference even for postulating a position of transcendence for the path of Guru Nanak. The terminology of the *jogīs* is used to convey his own conception of the true path to liberation.

1.1. *Paurī 2*

ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਆਕਾਰ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਹਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਹੋਵਨਿ ਜੀਅ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੀ ਉਤਮੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਦੁਖ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ॥  
 ਇਕਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਬਖਸੀਸ ਇਕਿ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਸਦਾ ਭਵਾਈਅਹਿ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਭੁ ਕੋ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਜੇ ਬੁਝੈ ਤ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਹੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥੨॥ (SGGS, p. 1)

Human frames come into existence by the divine order. It cannot be described. The soul comes into being by the divine order; through the divine order comes greatness. The high and the low are there due to the divine order; suffering and peace are received as ordained by it. Some receive the gift (of liberation) through the divine order, and some wander for ever (in transmigration). All are subject to the divine order and none is outside its sway. O' Nanak, if one recognizes the divine order, one does not attribute anything to oneself.

1.2. *Paurī 7*

ਜੇ ਜੁਗ ਚਾਰੇ ਆਰਜਾ ਹੋਰ ਦਸੁਣੀ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਵਾ ਖੰਡਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਨਾਲਿ ਚਲੈ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਚੰਗਾ ਨਾਉ ਰਖਾਇ ਕੈ ਜਸੁ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਜਗਿ ਲੇਇ ॥  
 ਜੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਨਦਰਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਤ ਵਾਤ ਨ ਪੁਛੈ ਕੇ ॥  
 ਕੀਟਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਕੀਟੁ ਕਰਿ ਦੋਸੀ ਦੋਸੁ ਧਰੇ ॥੧॥੭॥ (SGGS, p. 2)

If one's life were to span all the four cosmic ages or even ten times more, if one were to be known in all the nine regions of the earth and followed by all, if one were to enjoy a great reputation and to be widely praised, if he is not seen by the Lord with grace, he is of no count with anyone else. He may indeed be regarded as a vermin among vermins and accused of default even by the defaulters.

1.3. *Paurī 19*

ਅਸੰਖ ਨਾਵ ਅਸੰਖ ਥਾਵ ॥  
 ਅਗੰਮ ਅਗੰਮ ਅਸੰਖ ਲੋਅ ॥  
 ਅਸੰਖ ਕਹਹਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਭਾਰੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਅਖਰੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਖਰੀ ਸਾਲਾਹ ॥

ਅਖਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਗੀਤ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਹ ॥  
 ਅਖਰੀ ਲਿਖਣੁ ਬੋਲਣੁ ਬਾਣਿ ॥  
 ਅਖਰਾ ਸਿਰਿ ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ਵਖਾਣਿ ॥  
 ਜਿਨਿ ਏਹਿ ਲਿਖੇ ਤਿਸੁ ਸਿਰਿ ਨਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਜਿਵ ਫੁਰਮਾਏ ਤਿਵ ਤਿਵ ਪਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਜੇਤਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਤੇਤਾ ਨਾਉ ॥  
 ਵਿਣੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋ ਥਾਉ ॥  
 ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਵਣੁ ਕਹਾ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਵਾਰਿਆ ਨ ਜਾਵਾ ਏਕ ਵਾਰ ॥  
 ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸਾਈ ਭਲੀ ਕਾਰ ॥  
 ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਮਤਿ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ॥੧੯॥

(SGGS, p. 4)

Millions are the names (of the Formless Lord) and millions His abodes. Millions are His unfathomable realms. Even to talk of only millions is to be guilty of understatement. Nevertheless, He can be praised through words. The songs of divine knowledge can be composed through words, and His attributes adored. His utterance can be recorded only through words. Only through words can be conveyed what He ordains. He who ordains is not subject to any ordinance. What He ordains comes to pass. His power cannot be described even in a whole lifetime. What pleases You is good. You alone are everlasting, O' Formless Lord.

#### 1.4. *Paurī* 20

ਭਰੀਐ ਹਥੁ ਪੈਰੁ ਤਨੁ ਦੇਹ ॥  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਧੋਤੈ ਉਤਰਸੁ ਖੇਹ ॥  
 ਮੂਤ ਪਲੀਤੀ ਕਪੜੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਦੇ ਸਾਬੁਣੁ ਲਈਐ ਓਹੁ ਧੋਇ ॥  
 ਭਰੀਐ ਮਤਿ ਪਾਪਾ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ॥  
 ਓਹੁ ਧੋਪੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ॥  
 ਪੁੰਨੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਆਖਣੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਣਾ ਲਿਖਿ ਲੈ ਜਾਹੁ ॥  
 ਆਪੇ ਬੀਜਿ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਖਾਹੁ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੁਕਮੀ ਆਵਹੁ ਜਾਹੁ ॥੨੦॥

(SGGS, p. 4)

The dust on the hands and feet and other parts of the body can be washed with water. The cloth soiled by urine can be

washed with soap. But one defiled by sins can be washed only by the love of the Name. Piety and sin are not mere words. Whatever you do is recorded, and you reap what you sow. You come and go in accordance with the Divine order.

### 1.5. *Paurī* 27

ਸੋ ਦੁਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਸੋ ਘਰੁ ਕੇਹਾ ਜਿਤੁ ਬਹਿ ਸਰਬ ਸਮਾਲੇ ॥  
 ਵਾਜੇ ਨਾਦ ਅਨੇਕ ਅਸੰਖਾ ਕੇਤੇ ਵਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਕੇਤੇ ਰਾਗ ਪਰੀ ਸਿਉ ਕਹੀਅਨਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਾਵਣਹਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਤੁਹਨੋ ਪਉਣੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਗਾਵੈ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮੁ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥  
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਲਿਖਿ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਲਿਖਿ ਧਰਮੁ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥...  
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਵਰਭੰਡਾ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਰਖੇ ਧਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਸੋਈ ਤੁਧੁਨੋ ਗਾਵਹਿ ਜੋ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਨਿ ਰਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਭਗਤ ਰਸਾਲੇ ॥  
 ਹੋਰਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸੇ ਮੈ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਨਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਿਆ ਵੀਚਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਚੀ ਨਾਈ ॥  
 ਹੈ ਭੀ ਹੋਸੀ ਜਾਇ ਨ ਜਾਸੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਰਚਾਈ ॥  
 ਰੰਗੀ ਰੰਗੀ ਭਾਤੀ ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਜਿਨਸੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ॥  
 ਕਰਿ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਕੀਤਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਜਿਵ ਤਿਸ ਦੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥  
 ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਕਰਸੀ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਨ ਕਰਣਾ ਜਾਈ ॥  
 ਸੋ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਸਾਹਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਹਣੁ ਰਜਾਈ ॥੨੭॥

(SGGS, p. 6)

What is that door, that place, where You sit and look after all the creation. Innumerable are the instruments played there by millions of players. Innumerable are the *rāgs* and *rāginīs* sung by innumerable musicians. The air, water and fire sing Your praises. Sung are Your praises by the *Dharm Rāj* who performs justice on the basis of what Chit and Gupt record...

All the regions of the earth, the other worlds, and the universe created by You sing Your praises. Sung are Your praises by those with whom You are pleased, the devotees steeped in the love of the Name. Innumerable others whom I cannot recall, or know, sing Your praises. The only True Lord whose name is True has been, is, and shall be there, the creator of the universe who shall be there after His creation is no more. He has created the world in various colours and kinds. Having created the world He looks after all His creation. This is a mark of His greatness. He does what

He pleases and none else has any say. They who live in accordance with His will, O' Nanak, are the king of kings.

### 1.6. *Pauri* 33-34

ਆਖਣਿ ਜੋਰੁ ਚੁਪੈ ਨਹ ਜੋਰੁ ॥  
ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਮੰਗਣਿ ਦੇਣਿ ਨ ਜੋਰੁ ॥  
ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਜੀਵਣਿ ਮਰਣਿ ਨਹ ਜੋਰੁ ॥  
ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਰਾਜਿ ਮਾਲਿ ਮਨਿ ਸੋਰੁ ॥  
ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਸੁਰਤੀ ਗਿਆਨਿ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥  
ਜੋਰੁ ਨ ਜੁਗਤੀ ਛੁਟੈ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥  
ਜਿਸੁ ਹਥਿ ਜੋਰੁ ਕਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਸੋਇ ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਉਤਮੁ ਨੀਚੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥੩੩॥  
ਰਾਤੀ ਰੁਤੀ ਥਿਤੀ ਵਾਰ ॥  
ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮੁ ਸਾਲ ॥...॥੩੪॥ (SGGS, p. 7)

(On my own) I have no power to speak, or to remain silent. I have no power to beg, or to give. I have no power to rule or to collect wealth; both are the sources of commotion in the mind. I have no power to gain divine knowledge or to meditate. I have no power to find the way to liberation. He who has the power creates and watches over His creation. No one is superior or inferior, O' Nanak.

God created the nights and the days of the lunar month, and the seasons; He created the air, the water and the fire, and the nether worlds. In the midst of all these he installed the earth as the place of earning merit (*dharmasāl*).

### 1.7. *Shalok*

ਪਵਣੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਪਾਣੀ ਪਿਤਾ ਮਾਤਾ ਧਰਤਿ ਮਹਤੁ ॥  
ਦਿਵਸੁ ਰਾਤਿ ਦੁਇ ਦਾਈ ਦਾਇਆ ਖੇਲੈ ਸਗਲ ਜਗਤੁ ॥  
ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਬੁਰਿਆਈਆ ਵਾਚੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥  
ਕਰਮੀ ਆਪੋ ਆਪਣੀ ਕੇ ਨੇੜੈ ਕੇ ਦੂਰਿ ॥  
ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 8)

Air is the Guru, water is the father and earth the great mother. The day and night are the female and male nurses to keep the whole universe engaged in play. Both good and evil are



watched by the Judge and everyone is close to or distant from His court in accordance with the deeds. They who appropriate the Name, and reflect on it, perform the hard task well. Their countenances are bright, O' Nanak, and many others are liberated through them.

## 2. *So-Dar*

This composition is meant to be recited everyday at sunset. Its title comes from '*so-dar*' used at its beginning of the first hymn which is noticed in connection with the *Japujī*. It is followed by two hymns of Guru Nanak in *Rāg Āsā*, and one each by Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan in *Rāg Gūjri*. Guru Nanak dwells on the greatness of the Supreme Being, its incomprehensibility, and the utter need of His remembrance. Guru Ram Das prays for the gift of the Name and dwells on its indispensability. Guru Arjan gives reassurance about complete trust in God who looks after all His creation.

### 2.1. *Āsā M. 1*

ਆਖਾ ਜੀਵਾ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਉ ॥  
 ਆਖਣਿ ਅਉਖਾ ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਉ ॥  
 ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਭੂਖ ॥  
 ਉਤੁ ਭੂਖੈ ਖਾਇ ਚਲੀਅਹਿ ਦੂਖ ॥੧॥  
 ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਇ ॥  
 ਸਾਚਾ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸਾਚੈ ਨਾਇ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥  
 ਸਾਚੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਤਿਲੁ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥  
 ਆਖਿ ਥਕੇ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਨਹੀ ਪਾਈ ॥  
 ਜੇ ਸਭਿ ਮਿਲਿ ਕੈ ਆਖਣ ਪਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਵਡਾ ਨ ਹੋਵੈ ਘਾਟਿ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥੨॥  
 ਨਾ ਓਹੁ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਹੋਵੈ ਸੋਗੁ ॥  
 ਦੇਦਾ ਰਹੈ ਨ ਚੂਕੈ ਭੋਗੁ ॥  
 ਗੁਣੁ ਏਹੋ ਹੋਰੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾ ਕੋ ਹੋਆ ਨਾ ਕੋ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥  
 ਜੇਵਡੁ ਆਪਿ ਤੇਵਡ ਤੇਰੀ ਦਾਤਿ ॥  
 ਜਿਨਿ ਦਿਨੁ ਕਰਿ ਕੈ ਕੀਤੀ ਰਾਤਿ ॥

ਖਸਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਹਿ ਤੇ ਕਮਜਾਤਿ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਵੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਸਨਾਤਿ ॥੪॥੩॥

(SGGS, pp. 9-10)

By uttering the Name I live; when I forget, I die. If one hungers for the True Name, all one's suffering is removed when the hunger is appeased. Why should I forget Him, O' my mother, who is the True Lord and whose name is True. Even a particle of the greatness of the True Name has not been described though all have exhausted themselves with its praises. Were they all to come together and sing the Lord's praises, He would become neither greater nor smaller. He never dies and never feels sorrow; He continues to bestow and His stores never run short. This is His unique trait that there was none like Him ever and there shall be none like Him. His gifts are as great as He Himself is. He created the day and the night. He who forgets the Lord is low. He who does not appropriate the Name is the lowest of the low.

## 2.2. *Rāg Gūjri M. 4*

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਜਨ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਤਪੁਰਖਾ ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰਉ ਗੁਰ ਪਾਸਿ ॥

ਹਮ ਕੀਰੇ ਕਿਰਮ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਕਰਿ ਦਇਆ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥੧॥

ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤ ਗੁਰਦੇਵ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਰਗਾਸਿ ॥

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਪ੍ਰਾਨ ਸਖਾਈ ਹਰਿ ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ ਰਹਰਾਸਿ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

(SGGS, p. 10)

O' God's devotee, my True Guru, the embodiment of Truth, I make a supplication before you. Be merciful and show the light of the Name to us who are no better than worms; we have taken refuge with you. Show me the light of the name of Rām, O' my friend, my godlike Guru. May the Name received through the Guru's instruction be my life-long friend and singing praises of the Lord my life-long vocation.

## 2.3. *Rāg Gūjri M. 5*

ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਚਿਤਵਹਿ ਉਦਮੁ ਜਾ ਆਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਪਰਿਆ ॥

ਸੈਲ ਪਥਰ ਮਹਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਏ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਆਰੈ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਿਆ ॥੧॥

ਮੇਰੇ ਮਾਧਉ ਜੀ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਸੁ ਤਰਿਆ ॥

ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੂਕੇ ਕਾਸਟ ਹਰਿਆ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

(SGGS, p. 10)

Why are you anxious O' my mind about the means of subsistence when God makes provision for all. He has created living beings in rocks and stones and created sustenance too for them. He who joins the true association (*sat-saṅgat*) is redeemed through the grace of God. Through the grace of the Guru he attains the supreme state (of liberation).

### 3. *So-Purkh*

The title is derived from *so-purkh* used at the beginning of Guru Ram Das's hymn in *Rāg Āsā* on the Supreme Being and His attributes. There is another hymn on the same theme in this unit, followed by Guru Nanak's hymn in *Rāg Āsā* on the need of the remembrance of God. A hymn of Guru Arjan in *Rāg Āsā* dwells on human life as a rare opportunity for liberation.

#### 3.1. *Rāg Āsā M. 4*

ਸੋ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਅਗਮਾ ਅਗਮ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥  
 ਸਭਿ ਧਿਆਵਹਿ ਸਭਿ ਧਿਆਵਹਿ ਤੁਧੁ ਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਸਚੇ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰਾ ॥  
 ਸਭਿ ਜੀਅ ਤੁਮਾਰੇ ਜੀ ਤੂੰ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਦਾਤਾਰਾ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਜੀ ਸਭਿ ਦੂਖ ਵਿਸਾਰਣਹਾਰਾ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜੀ,  
 ਕਿਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਜੰਤ ਵਿਚਾਰਾ ॥੧॥...  
 ਤੂੰ ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਜੀ ਤੁਧੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥  
 ਤੂੰ ਜਗੁ ਜਗੁ ਏਕੋ ਸਦਾ ਸਦਾ ਤੂੰ ਏਕੋ ਜੀ ਤੂੰ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਸੋਈ ॥  
 ਤੁਧੁ ਆਪੇ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੋਈ ਵਰਤੈ ਜੀ ਤੂੰ ਆਪੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਸੁ ਹੋਈ ॥  
 ਤੁਧੁ ਆਪੇ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਭ ਉਪਾਈ ਜੀ ਤੁਧੁ ਆਪੇ ਸਿਰਜਿ ਸਭ ਗੋਈ ॥  
 ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਵੈ ਕਰਤੇ ਕੇ ਜੀ ਜੋ ਸਭਸੈ ਕਾ ਜਾਣੋਈ ॥੫॥

(SGGS, pp. 10-11)

The Supreme Being is pure, without a stain. The Supreme Lord is beyond comprehension and without any limits. All, without an exception, meditate on You, O' Sire, the True Creator. All created beings belong to You and all receive Your bounty. Meditate on the Lord, O' *sants*, He is the dispeller of all suffering. He Himself is the deity and Himself the

devotee. The created beings are nothing, O' Nanak, in comparison with the Creator.(1)...

You are the Primal Being, the most excellent Creator, and none else is so great as You. The One Only in every age and for all times, You are the everlasting Creator. Only what You will and what You do comes to pass. You alone have created the universe and You alone can destroy it. Nanak sings praises of the Creator who knows all and everything. (5)

### 3.2. *Āsā M. 5*

ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ॥

ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ॥

ਅਵਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਿਤੈ ਨ ਕਾਮ॥

ਮਿਲੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਭਜੁ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ॥੧॥

ਸਰੰਜਾਮਿ ਲਾਗੁ ਭਵਜਲ ਤਰਨ ਕੈ॥

ਜਨਮੁ ਬ੍ਰਿਥਾ ਜਾਤ ਰੰਗਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੈ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥ (SGGS, p. 12)

You have been blessed with a human birth. This is the precious opportunity for you to meet God. Nothing else is of any use to you: meditate on the Name in association with *sādhīs* (Sikhs). Put in your best effort to cross the dreadful ocean (of transmigration). Your life is passing in vain in pursuit of *māyā*.

### 4. *Sobilā*

This composition is meant to be recited every night before going to sleep. The title is derived from *sobilā* used in a hymn of Guru Nanak in *Rāg Gaurī Deepakī* which simultaneously refers to death and wedding. It is followed by another hymn of Guru Nanak in *Rāg Āsā* on the changing forms of the creator. Another hymn by Guru Nanak in *Rāg Dhanāsri* refers to the *ārati* appropriate for the Supreme Being. It is followed by a hymn by Guru Ram Das in *Rāg Gaurī Pūrabī* on the good fortune of meeting the Guru and appropriating the Name. The last hymn in the same *Rāg* is by Guru Arjan on liberation through the Name.

4.1. *Rāg Dhanāsarī M. 1*

ਗਗਨ ਮੈ ਥਾਲੁ ਰਵਿ ਚੰਦੁ ਦੀਪਕ ਬਨੇ,  
 ਤਾਰਿਕਾ ਮੰਡਲ ਜਨਕ ਮੋਤੀ ॥  
 ਧੂਧੁ ਮਲਆਨਲੋ ਪਵਣੁ ਚਵਰੋ ਕਰੇ,  
 ਸਗਲ ਬਨਰਾਇ ਫੁਲੰਤ ਜੋਤੀ ॥੧॥  
 ਕੈਸੀ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਭਵ ਖੰਡਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਆਰਤੀ ॥  
 ਅਨਹਤਾ ਸਬਦ ਵਾਜੰਤ ਭੇਰੀ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥  
 ਸਹਸ ਤਵ ਨੈਨ ਨਨ ਨੈਨ ਹਰਿ ਤੋਹਿ ਕਉ,  
 ਸਹਸ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਨਨਾ ਏਕ ਤੁਹੀ ॥  
 ਸਹਸ ਪਦ ਬਿਮਲ ਨਨ ਏਕ ਪਦ ਗੰਧ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਹਸ,  
 ਤਵ ਗੰਧ ਇਵ ਚਲਤ ਮੋਹੀ ॥੨॥  
 ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ ॥  
 ਤਿਸ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਗੁਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਜੋ ਤਿਸੁ ਭਾਵੈ ਸੁ ਆਰਤੀ ਹੋਇ ॥੩॥

(SGGS, p. 13)

The sun and the moon are the lamps in the sky as the salver. The orb of stars serves as studded pearls. The fragrance of sandalwood is the incense and the air is the flywhisk; the entire vegetation serves as flowers for the Lord. What a beautiful *ārātī* is being performed for the Destroyer of Fear. The unstruck music serves as the drum. Without an eye, You see as if You have a thousand eyes; without any form You assume a thousand forms. You have no feet and yet You have a thousand feet which are pure. You have no nose but You can smell things as if You have a thousand noses. I am enamoured of this play. There is the same light in all, the light of the Lord that shines in every human being. This light is seen through the Guru's instruction. What pleases the Lord is His real *ārātī*.

4.2. *Gaurī Pūrabi M. 5*

ਕਰਉ ਬੇਨੰਤੀ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਮੀਤਾ ਸੰਤ ਟਹਲ ਕੀ ਬੇਲਾ ॥  
 ਈਹਾ ਖਾਟਿ ਚਲਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਲਾਹਾ ਆਗੈ ਬਸਨੁ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ॥੧॥  
 ਅਉਧ ਘਟੈ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਰੈਣਾਰੇ ॥  
 ਮਨ ਗੁਰ ਮਿਲਿ ਕਾਜ ਸਵਾਰੇ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥

ਇਹੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਬਿਕਾਰੁ ਸੰਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਤਰਿਓ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ॥  
 ਜਿਸਹਿ ਜਗਾਇ ਪੀਆਵੈ ਇਹੁ ਰਸੁ ਅਕਥ ਕਥਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਾਨੀ ॥੨॥  
 ਜਾ ਕਉ ਆਏ ਸੋਈ ਬਿਹਾਝਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਮਨਹਿ ਬਸੇਰਾ ॥  
 ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਾਵਹੁ ਸੁਖ ਸਹਜੇ ਬਹੁਰਿ ਨ ਹੋਇਗੋ ਵੇਰਾ ॥੩॥  
 ਅੰਤਰਜਾਮੀ ਪੁਰਖ ਬਿਧਾਤੇ ਸਰਧਾ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਪੂਰੇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸੁ ਇਹੈ ਸੁਖੁ ਮਾਰੈ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਕਰਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਧੂਰੇ ॥੪॥੫॥

(SGGS, p. 13)

Listen to the supplication I make, O' my friend. This is the time to serve the *sants*. Earn the merit of serving the Lord here so that you have a happy abode in the hereafter. The span of your life goes on decreasing day by day. Meet the Guru to set your affairs right. The world is engrossed in falsehood and fear; only he who attains divine knowledge is redeemed. He who is awakened by the Lord to drink the juice (of the Name) understands His discourse. Purchase the goods for which you have come here so that God and the Guru are lodged in your heart. You would find peace and the state of bliss in your own home and would not be born again. May the yearning of my heart be fulfilled by the Lord who knows the innermost thoughts and who is the Ordainer. Nanak, the servant of God, prays that he may be made the dust of the feet of the *sants*.

## 5. *Āsā dī Vār*

Professor Sahib Singh has pointed out that Guru Nanak's *Vār* in *Rāg Āsā* originally had only the 24 *paurīs*; the *shaloks* were added when Guru Arjan compiled the *Granth*. The 24 *paurīs* of *Āsā dī Vār* contain some political comment but relate largely to God, the Guru, and the way of liberation. The *shaloks* are much larger in number, cover all these themes, and contain comment on social order, polity and contemporary religion. The social comment includes caste and gender. The comment on Muslim beliefs and practices include the scripture, the law, and the burial. The comment on the *jogīs* relates to austerities, renunciation and mendicancy as the common denomination of the ascetical tradition as a whole.

The comment on Vaishnava bhakti underscores the rejection of incarnation and the futility of dance and drama as a form of religious worship. The comment on the Brahmins includes scriptures, sacred places, worship of idols, cooperation with the rulers (who are otherwise regarded as *malechh*), the sacred thread, the *shrādh*s, and the notion of pollution and purity. Thus, with the addition of *shaloks* the scope of *Āsā dī Vār* becomes more comprehensive than that of the *Japujī*.

The first three *paurīs* of the *Vār* refer to the creation of the physical and the moral world. God created Himself and His power; He looks at His creation with pleasure. God gives life and takes it away; He is the doer of everything, and one cannot complain to anyone else. He who is the doer, only He can take care. He is the *kartā*, *kādar* and *karīm* who sustains life in the world; apart from Him there is no refuge. He created human beings and made them responsible for their actions. What counts in the hereafter is only good deeds and God's adoration. In three other *paurīs*, Guru Nanak dwells on God's greatness, His will, and His grace. It is through His grace that human beings act in accordance with His *bukam*.

A number of *paurīs* underscore the crucial role of the true Guru. Without the true Guru no one can find God; the true Guru himself removes the chain of attachment (*moh*) and leads to liberation. The *manmukh* who does not turn to the true Guru wastes his life because only by meeting the true Guru can one lodge the truth in the heart. Through God's grace (*karm*) and the grace (*kirpā*) of the Guru one may find God and be absorbed in the truth. Through the instruction (*updes*) of the true Guru one attains *giān*. Praise the true Guru who possesses greatness; through God's grace one may meet him; he removes evil from human beings by placing his hand on their forehead.

Human life is a rare opportunity for liberation. One should do good deeds to serve one's own interest. They who

meditate on the only eternal truth earn merit; they praise God for His grace and find Him. God likes the devotees who sing his praises. They cherish the dust of the feet of those who have found God; they discard greed and meditate on God. What matters is not learning, or lack of learning, but what one does to earn merit. One should learn that none is to be denounced as depraved. One has to account for what one does; there is no point in pride when we know that we have to leave the world. Why should one forget the Master who gave life and breath? Remember the Lord whose service brings peace. The servant of God should do what the Master likes; the only proper approach to Him is supplication (*ardās*).

Three *paurīs* in *Āsā dī Vār* contain what may be called political comment. One of these refers to the human frame and beauty being left behind after death and reward or punishment being received according to good or bad deeds. In another *paurī*, the reference is clearly to the Muslim ruler (*sultān*). The third refers to the masters of caparisoned horses, colourful *harams*, splendid palaces and tall residences who wasted their lives without knowing God.

In the *shaloks*, Guru Nanak underscores God's greatness and His attributes. Everything related to Him is true: the universe, the worlds, the continents and the forms He has created; His decree and his court, His ordinance and His command; and His grace. They who meditate on Him become holy. Great is God's exaltation; mighty is His Name; true is His justice; and immutable is His station; He knows everyone's innermost thoughts and desires; He confers favours of His free will; all that happens is due to His will (*razā*).

Marvellous is God's creation: the varied forms of speech and scripture; the multiplicity of creation and its distinctions; the created forms and their variety. God's power is manifest everywhere: in the nether regions and the skies. Having brought forth creatures he looks after them all. The creator



who made them is mindful of them. God alone has no fear of annihilation. Everything else is false and short-lived. Human beings remain preoccupied with themselves, suffering from the malady of self-centredness (*haumai*). They know nothing of the essence of liberation. Only truth leads to liberation and in order to be true one should bear truth in one's heart. The door of liberation becomes accessible to the one who listens to the Divine Name.

Several *shaloks* relate to the Guru. They who meet the true Guru attain peace, and get rid of *haumai* through the *shabad*. Through the true Guru's guidance one may receive true instruction and become true. There can be no *giān* without the Guru. The path to God lies in sincere dedication, but this path cannot be found without the true Guru.

There is much other instruction in the *shaloks* of *Āsā dī Vār*. Neither caste nor power has any value in the hereafter. Sensual pleasure and devotion do not go together. In sweetness and humility lies the essence of merit. God has fashioned all vessels; only they are exalted who receive His grace.

In an explicit statement, the Turko-Afghan rule is presented as characteristic of the Kaliyuga. There is the famine of truth in the Kaliyuga, and falsehood has spread all over. Human beings have turned into goblins. Avarice, evil, and lust are dominant like the *rāja*, the *mehtā* and the *shiqqdār*. The chariot in the Kaliyuga is made of passion, with falsehood as the charioteer.

The Musalmāns praised the *sharī'at* above all else to have a sight of God. In their belief, the non-Muslims were destined to suffer the torments of hell. However, only God knows what would happen to human beings after death. The Muslim claim to an exclusive possession of the truth had no justification.

The *shaloks* are rather full of comment on non-Muslim beliefs and practices. Guru Nanak equates Hindus with the Brahmanical systems of religious belief and practice. They

praise God as laid down in the Shastras; they bathe at sacred places and worship idols. They cherish the sacred thread and the sacred mark on the forehead. However, in the eyes of Guru Nanak, neither the sacred thread nor the sacred mark has any merit in comparison with the true Name. Guru Nanak has much to say about the *pandit*, the kingpin of the Brahmanical system. He flaunts his wisdom and skill in arguments in order to gather wealth. He reads books, performs worship, and engages in contention. He recites the *Gāyatrī* three times a day. But the only way to please God is to meditate on Him with complete sincerity. The sacred thread that the Brahman wears has no spiritual or moral efficacy. The Khatri taxes cows and Brahmans, and panders to the rulers who are regarded as 'unclean'. The upper caste Hindus eat the meat of a goat slaughtered in the Muslim fashion. And yet they sit in their *chaukā* to tell others not to come near so that their food is not polluted.

The notion of impurity (*sūtak*) to which the Brahman attaches crucial importance is rejected by Guru Nanak. The whole idea of *sūtak* is an illusion; birth and death occur through God's will; food and drink created by God is pure. In connection with the idea of impurity, Guru Nanak brings in the question of gender. Women are regarded as impure because of menstruation, but there can be no regeneration without them. The Brahman's performance at *shrādh*s serves only his interest. If the earnings of a *jajmān* are unlawful and he feeds Brahmans for the benefit of his dead ancestors, the whole exercise is futile; the ancestors cannot derive any benefit.

The Vaishnava worship of Rama and Krishna as the incarnations of Vishnu is futile. Even he is not the Supreme Deity. The whole universe is dancing in praise of the Supreme Being. His worship alone leads to liberation. Loving devotion (*bhāo*) to God arises from the awe (*bhau*) of His power and greatness. Dancing and jumping are sources of a passing pleasure. Common to the *jogīs* and other ascetics

in various garbs, who inflict physical pain on themselves and regret in the end, are austerities and renunciation. Guru Nanak is opposed to both.

Guru Nanak had no appreciation for the distinctions of caste. The only boon that he seeks as a *dhāḍhī* (who was seen as of a low caste) is that he may meditate on God. There is no consideration for caste in God's court. The light of God is in the whole universe and in every created being. Only he who is devoted to God in love and calls himself low attains to liberation. 'If you wish well of yourself, do good deeds and call yourself low'.

### 5.1. *Shalok M. 1*

ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਗੁਰ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਿਉਹਾੜੀ ਸਦ ਵਾਰ॥  
ਜਿਨਿ ਮਾਣਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ ਕਰਤ ਨ ਲਾਗੀ ਵਾਰ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 462)

I am hundred times a sacrifice to my Guru who transformed human beings into gods in no time.

### 5.2. *Shalok M. 2*

ਜੇ ਸਉ ਚੰਦਾ ਉਗਵਹਿ ਸੂਰਜ ਚੜਹਿ ਹਜਾਰ॥  
ਏਤੇ ਚਾਨਣ ਹੋਇਆ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਘੋਰ ਅੰਧਾਰ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 463)

If a hundred moons were to arise and a thousand suns. Despite all their light, there would be pitch darkness without the Guru.

### 5.3. *Shalok M. 1*

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਨ ਚੇਤਨੀ ਮਨਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਸੁਚੇਤ॥  
ਛੁਟੇ ਤਿਲ ਬੂਆੜ ਜਿਉ ਸੁੰਢੇ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਖੇਤ॥ (SGGS, p. 463)

Nanak, they who regard themselves as clever and do not think of the Guru are left forlorn in the field like the spurious sesame which blossom and flower but carry ashes within.

### 5.4. *Shalok M. 2*

ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਸਚੈ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਕੋਠੜੀ ਸਚੇ ਕਾ ਵਿਚਿ ਵਾਸੁ॥  
ਇਕਨ੍ਹਾ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਸਮਾਇ ਲਏ ਇਕਨ੍ਹਾ ਹੁਕਮੇ ਕਰੇ ਵਿਣਾਸੁ॥

ਇਕਨ੍ਹ ਭਾਣੈ ਕਢਿ ਲਏ ਇਕਨ੍ਹ ਮਾਇਆ ਵਿਚਿ ਨਿਵਾਸੁ ॥  
 ਏਵ ਭਿ ਆਖਿ ਨ ਜਾਪਈ ਜਿ ਕਿਸੈ ਆਣੈ ਰਾਸਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਜਾ ਕਉ ਆਖਿ ਕਰੇ ਪਰਗਾਸੁ ॥੩॥

(SGGS, p. 463)

This world is the chamber of the True One and He resides in it. Some by the divine order are absorbed in Him and some remain subject to Death. Some He is pleased to redeem and some to keep engrossed in *māyā*. It is not possible to say who would be reclaimed. Nanak, only he becomes a *Gurmukh* whom He shows the light.

### 5.5. *Paurī* 2

ਨਾਨਕ ਜੀਅ ਉਪਾਇ ਕੈ ਲਿਖਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ॥  
 ਓਥੈ ਸਚੇ ਹੀ ਸਚਿ ਨਿਬੜੈ ਚੁਣਿ ਵੱਖਿ ਕਢੇ ਜਜਮਾਲਿਆ ॥  
 ਥਾਉ ਨ ਪਾਇਨਿ ਕੂੜਿਆਰ ਮੁਹ ਕਾਲੈ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਚਾਲਿਆ ॥  
 ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਇ ਰਤੇ ਸੇ ਜਿਣਿ ਗਏ ਹਾਰਿ ਗਏ ਸਿ ਠਗਣ ਵਾਲਿਆ ॥  
 ਲਿਖਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਬਹਾਲਿਆ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 463)

Nanak, God installed a judge after creating the human beings to keep an account of their deeds. In His court true justice is done and the false are separated from the true. The false find no place in His court; their faces are blackened and they are consigned to hell. They who are imbued with the Name win the day and the cheats lose the game. God has installed a judge for all accounts.

### 5.6. *Shalok M.* 1

ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਪਵਣੁ ਵਹੈ ਸਦਵਾਉ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਲਖ ਦਰੀਆਉ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਅਗਨਿ ਕਢੇ ਵੇਗਾਰਿ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਦਬੀ ਭਾਰਿ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਇੰਦੁ ਫਿਰੈ ਸਿਰ ਭਾਰਿ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਰਾਜਾ ਧਰਮ ਦੁਆਰੁ ॥  
 ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਭੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਚੰਦੁ ॥  
 ਕੋਹ ਕਰੋੜੀ ਚਲਤ ਨ ਅੰਤੁ ॥...॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 464)

In the Lord's awe blows the wind, and in His awe flow lacs of rivers. The fire is forced to labour in the Lord's awe, and in His awe the earth remains under burden. The cloud moves

on its head in God's awe and in His awe stands the judge at His door. The sun and the moon under His awe, travel millions of miles and move on.

### 5.7. *Shalok M. 1*

ਨਾਨਕ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਹੋਰਿ ਕੇਤੇ ਰਾਮ ਰਵਾਲ ॥  
 ਕੇਤੀਆ ਕੰਨ੍ਹ ਕਹਾਣੀਆ ਕੇਤੇ ਬੇਦ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥  
 ਕੇਤੇ ਨਚਹਿ ਮੰਗਤੇ ਗਿਝਿ ਮੁਝਿ ਪੂਰਹਿ ਤਾਲ ॥  
 ਬਾਜਾਰੀ ਬਾਜਾਰ ਮਹਿ ਆਇ ਕਵਹਿ ਬਾਜਾਰ ॥  
 ਗਾਵਹਿ ਰਾਜੇ ਰਾਣੀਆ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਆਲ ਪਤਾਲ ॥  
 ਲਖ ਟਕਿਆ ਕੇ ਮੁੰਦੜੇ ਲਖ ਟਕਿਆ ਕੇ ਹਾਰ ॥  
 ਜਿਤੁ ਤਨਿ ਪਾਈਅਹਿ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਸੇ ਤਨ ਹੋਵਹਿ ਛਾਰ ॥  
 ਗਿਆਨੁ ਨ ਗਲੀਈ ਢੂਢੀਐ ਕਬਨਾ ਕਰੜਾ ਸਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕਰਮਿ ਮਿਲੈ ਤਾ ਪਾਈਐ ਹੋਰ ਹਿਕਮਤਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, pp. 464-65)

Nanak, the Formless One alone is without fear, and not the innumerable others like Rām who are mere dust. There are many stories of Krishan and there are many who talk of the Vedas. Many beggars dance to the beat of music. They exhibit their skill in the market, singing of kings and queens. They wear earrings and necklaces worth lacs of *lakās* but their bodies turn into ash. Divine knowledge is not a matter of mere talk. It is received through divine grace; worldly wisdom and power lead only to humiliation.

### 5.8. *Shalok M. 1(1)*

ਘੜੀਆ ਸਭੇ ਗੋਪੀਆ ਪਹਰ ਕੰਨ੍ਹ ਗੋਪਾਲ ॥  
 ਗਹਣੇ ਪਉਣੁ ਪਾਣੀ ਬੈਸੰਤਰੁ ਚੰਦੁ ਸੂਰਜੁ ਅਵਤਾਰ ॥  
 ਸਗਲੀ ਧਰਤੀ ਮਾਲੁ ਧਨੁ ਵਰਤਣਿ ਸਰਬ ਜੰਜਾਲ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਮੁਸੈ ਗਿਆਨ ਵਿਹੂਣੀ ਖਾਇ ਗਇਆ ਜਮਕਾਲੁ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 465)

All the *gharīs* are *gopīs*, and the *pahars* Krishna and the cowherds. The air, water and fire are ornaments and the sun and the moon are the incarnations. All the earth is His property and wealth and its uses are entanglement. Nanak, without divine knowledge the whole world is plundered and devoured by Death.

5.9. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਵਾਇਨਿ ਚੇਲੇ ਨਚਨਿ ਗੁਰ॥  
 ਪੈਰ ਹਲਾਇਨਿ ਫੇਰਨ੍ਹ ਸਿਰ॥  
 ਉਡਿ ਉਡਿ ਰਾਵਾ ਝਾਟੈ ਪਾਇ॥  
 ਵੇਖੈ ਲੋਕੁ ਹਸੈ ਘਰਿ ਜਾਇ॥  
 ਰੋਟੀਆ ਕਾਰਣਿ ਪੂਰਹਿ ਤਾਲ॥  
 ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾੜਹਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਨਾਲਿ॥  
 ਗਾਵਨਿ ਗੋਪੀਆ ਗਾਵਨਿ ਕਾਨ੍॥  
 ਗਾਵਨਿ ਸੀਤਾ ਰਾਜੇ ਰਾਮ॥  
 ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰੁ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ॥  
 ਜਾ ਕਾ ਕੀਆ ਸਗਲ ਜਹਾਨੁ॥  
 ਸੇਵਕ ਸੇਵਹਿ ਕਰਮਿ ਚੜਾਉ॥  
 ਭਿੰਨੀ ਰੈਣਿ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਮਨਿ ਚਾਉ॥  
 ਸਿਖੀ ਸਿਖਿਆ ਗੁਰ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ॥  
 ਨਦਰੀ ਕਰਮਿ ਲਘਾਏ ਪਾਰਿ॥

(SGGS, p. 465)

The disciples play the music and their preceptors dance. They move their feet and roll their heads. Dust flies and falls on their bare heads. The people watch, laugh, and go home. The performers beat the time for bread. They bend their bodies to touch the ground. They sing as *gopīs* and *Kābh*; they sing as Sita and Rāja Rām. The whole world is created by the Fearless Formless One whose name is True. Only they serve Him who receive His grace. They rise early in the morning to meditate on His Name in love. They have reflected on the Guru's instruction. He enables them to ferry across through his grace.

5.10. *Shalok M. 1*

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨਾ ਸਿਵਤਿ ਸਰੀਅਤਿ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ॥  
 ਬੰਦੇ ਸੇ ਜਿ ਪਵਹਿ ਵਿਚਿ ਬੰਦੀ ਵੇਖਣ ਕਉ ਦੀਦਾਰੁ॥

(SGGS, p. 465)

The Musalmāns praise the *sharī'at*, study it, and reflect on it. (In their view) the servant of God performs His service with dedication to see His face. (The true devotees of God yearn to sing His praises, with the True Name as their support).

5.11. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਮਿਟੀ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨ ਕੀ ਪੇੜੈ ਪਈ ਕੁਮਿਆਰ ॥  
 ਘੜਿ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਇਟਾ ਕੀਆ ਜਲਦੀ ਕਰੇ ਪੁਕਾਰ ॥  
 ਜਲਿ ਜਲਿ ਰੋਵੈ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਝੜਿ ਝੜਿ ਪਵਹਿ ਅੰਗਿਆਰ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰਤੈ ਕਾਰਣੁ ਕੀਆ ਸੋ ਜਾਣੈ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 466)

The clay of a Musalmān's grave becomes the potter's clod to make vessels and bricks. It cries when it burns in the kiln. The poor thing burns and cries, and cinders fly from it. Nanak, only the creator who made the world knows (what would happen after death).

5.12. *Shalok M. 2*

ਹਉਮੈ ਏਹਾ ਜਾਤਿ ਹੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਹਉਮੈ ਏਈ ਬੰਧਨਾ ਫਿਰਿ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੋਨੀ ਪਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਹਉਮੈ ਕਿਬਹੁ ਊਪਜੈ ਕਿਤੁ ਸੰਜਮਿ ਇਹ ਜਾਇ ॥  
 ਹਉਮੈ ਏਹੋ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਪਇਐ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਫਿਰਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਹਉਮੈ ਦੋਰਘ ਰੋਗੁ ਹੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਭੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਜੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਤਾ ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਕਮਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕੁ ਕਹੈ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਜਨਹੁ ਇਤੁ ਸੰਜਮਿ ਦੁਖ ਜਾਹਿ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 466)

Human beings, inevitably, act in *baumai*. It keeps them chained to transmigration. Where does it come from and how is it removed? It accords with the divine order that human beings should wander (from birth to birth) due to acts performed in *baumai*. It is a malady that contains its own remedy. Through God's grace one may live in accordance with the Guru's *shabad*. Listen to me O' people, says Nanak, this is the way to get rid of suffering.

5.13. *Shalok M. 1*

ਕੂੜ ਰਾਜਾ ਕੂੜ ਪਰਜਾ ਕੂੜ ਸਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜ ਮੰਡਪ ਕੂੜ ਮਾੜੀ ਕੂੜ ਬੈਸਣਹਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜ ਸੁਇਨਾ ਕੂੜ ਰੁਪਾ ਕੂੜ ਪੈਨਣਹਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜ ਕਾਇਆ ਕੂੜ ਕਪੜ ਕੂੜ ਰੂਪੁ ਅਪਾਰੁ ॥

ਕੂੜੁ ਮੀਆ ਕੂੜੁ ਬੀਬੀ ਖਪਿ ਹੋਏ ਖਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜਿ ਕੂੜੈ ਨੇਹੁ ਲਗਾ ਵਿਸਰਿਆ ਕਰਤਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕਿਸੁ ਨਾਲਿ ਕੀਚੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਸਭੁ ਜਗੁ ਚਲਣਹਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜੁ ਮਿਠਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਮਾਖਿਉ ਕੂੜੁ ਡੋਬੇ ਪੂਰੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕੁ ਵਖਾਣੈ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਾਝੁ ਕੂੜੈ ਕੂੜੁ ॥੧॥ (SGGS, p. 468)

False is the ruler and false the subjects; the whole world is false. False are the tall mansions and they who live in them. False is gold and false is silver, and false are the wearers. False is the body, false are the robes, and false is the beautiful form. False is the husband and false the wife, both humiliated after death. The false are attached to the false in total oblivion of the Creator. Whom can one befriend when the whole world is ephemeral. Falsehood is sweet like honey. A full boat is drowned by falsehood. Nanak makes the submission that everything is false except You (O' True Lord).

#### 5.14. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਲਬੁ ਪਾਪੁ ਦੁਇ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਹਤਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਿਕਦਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕਾਮੁ ਨੇਬੁ ਸਦਿ ਪੁਛੀਐ ਬਹਿ ਬਹਿ ਕਰੇ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥

(SGGS, pp. 468-69)

Avarice is the ruler, sin is the *mehtā*, and falsehood is the *shiqqḍār*. Lust is the deputy who is called and consulted for planning. The subject people are ignorant, devoid of knowledge; they submit without a murmur.

#### 5.15. *Shalok M. 1*

ਕਲਿ ਮਹਿ ਬੇਦੁ ਅਬਰਬਣੁ ਹੂਆ ਨਾਉ ਖੁਦਾਈ ਅਲਹੁ ਭਇਆ ॥  
 ਨੀਲ ਬਸਤ੍ਰੁ ਲੇ ਕਪੜੇ ਪਹਿਰੇ ਤੁਰਕ ਪਠਾਣੀ ਅਮਲੁ ਕੀਆ ॥  
 ਚਾਰੇ ਵੇਦ ਹੋਏ ਸਚਿਆਰ ॥  
 ਪੜਹਿ ਗੁਣਹਿ ਤਿਨੁ ਚਾਰ ਵੀਚਾਰ ॥  
 ਭਉ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਰਿ ਨੀਚੁ ਸਦਾਏ ॥  
 ਤਉ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮੋਖੰਤਰੁ ਪਾਏ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 470)

The Veda for the Kaliyuga is the Atharvana, and the name of God is Allah. The commendable dress now is of the blue. coloured cloth and power is with the Turks and the Pathans. All the four Vedas, one each for the four *yugas*, have turned out to be true. He who is dedicated to God in love, and stands with the low, O' Nanak, attains liberation now.



5.16. *Paurī* 14

ਕਪੜੁ ਰੂਪੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਣਾ ਛਡਿ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਜਾਵਣਾ ॥  
 ਮੰਦਾ ਚੰਗਾ ਆਪਣਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਕੀਤਾ ਪਾਵਣਾ ॥  
 ਹੁਕਮ ਕੀਏ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵਦੇ ਰਾਹਿ ਭੀੜੈ ਅਗੈ ਜਾਵਣਾ ॥  
 ਨੰਗਾ ਦੋਜਕਿ ਚਾਲਿਆ ਤਾ ਦਿਸੈ ਖਰਾ ਡਰਾਵਣਾ ॥  
 ਕਰਿ ਅਉਗਣ ਪਛੋਤਾਵਣਾ ॥੧੪॥

(SGGS, pp. 470-71)

Comely robes and beautiful form are left behind in the world, and one is judged by the good or bad deeds performed in one's life. He who issued orders at will in the world has now to traverse the narrow path. He looks frightening when he goes to hell all-naked. He who does evil deeds has to regret in the end.

5.17. *Shalok M.* 1

ਦਇਆ ਕਪਾਹ ਸੰਤੋਖੁ ਸੂਤੁ ਜਤੁ ਗੰਢੀ ਸਤੁ ਵਟੁ ॥  
 ਏਹੁ ਜਨੇਊ ਜੀਅ ਕਾ ਹਈ ਤ ਪਾਡੇ ਘਤੁ ॥

(SGGS, p. 471)

Put on the *janeū*, O' Pāñḍe, if you have the cotton of compassion and the thread of contentment, with the knot of continence. Such a thread does not snap, it is not soiled, and it does not burn. Praise be to the one, O' Nanak, who wears such a thread.

5.18. *Shalok M.* 1

ਗਊ ਬਿਰਾਹਮਣ ਕਉ ਕਰੁ ਲਾਵਹੁ ਗੋਬਰਿ ਤਰਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥  
 ਧੋਤੀ ਟਿਕਾ ਤੈ ਜਪਮਾਲੀ ਧਾਨੁ ਮਲੇਛਾ ਖਾਈ ॥  
 ਅੰਤਰਿ ਪੂਜਾ ਪੜਹਿ ਕਤੇਬਾ ਸੰਜਮੁ ਤੁਰਕਾ ਭਾਈ ॥  
 ਛੋਡੀਲੇ ਪਾਖੰਡਾ ॥  
 ਨਾਮਿ ਲਇਐ ਜਾਹਿ ਤਰੰਦਾ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 471)

You tax the cow and the Brahman; the cow-dung (with which you purify the ground) would not save you. You wear *dhōtī*, *ṭikkā* and *mālā* but you eat the food of the *malechh* (whose touch you say is polluting). Within your home you worship your own deity but in public you read the books of the Turks and follow their ways. Discard this hypocrisy. Only by appropriating the Name can one swim across (the ocean of life).

5.19. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਮਾਣਸ ਖਾਣੇ ਕਰਹਿ ਨਿਵਾਜ ॥  
 ਛੁਰੀ ਵਗਾਇਨਿ ਤਿਨ ਗਲਿ ਤਾਗ ॥  
 ਤਿਨ ਘਰਿ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣ ਪੂਰਹਿ ਨਾਦ ॥  
 ਉਨ੍ਹਾ ਭਿ ਆਵਹਿ ਓਈ ਸਾਦ ॥  
 ਕੂੜੀ ਰਾਸਿ ਕੂੜਾ ਵਾਪਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਕੂੜੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਕਰਹਿ ਆਹਾਰੁ ॥  
 ਸਰਮ ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਡੇਰਾ ਦੂਰਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕੂੜੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ ॥  
 ਮਥੈ ਟਿਕਾ ਤੇਜ਼ਿ ਧੋਤੀ ਕਖਾਈ ॥  
 ਹਥਿ ਛੁਰੀ ਜਗਤ ਕਾਸਾਈ ॥

(SGGS, pp. 471-72)

They who eat human flesh, offer (five daily) prayers; they who wield the knife put on the sacred thread. The Brahman blows the conch in their homes. They have the same tastes. False is the capital and false their trade. They subsist on falsehood. The abode of *dharm* and *sarm* is very far from them. They are filled with falsehood, O' Nanak, even though the sacred thread is on the forehead and the ochre-coloured *dhoti* around their waist. With the knife in their hand, they are butchers of the world.

5.20. *Shalok M. 1(1)*

ਜੇ ਕਰਿ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਮੰਨੀਐ ਸਭ ਤੈ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਗੋਹੇ ਅਤੈ ਲਕੜੀ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਕੀੜਾ ਹੋਇ ॥  
 ਜੇਤੇ ਦਾਣੇ ਅੰਨ ਕੇ ਜੀਆ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਪਹਿਲਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਜੀਉ ਹੈ ਜਿਤੁ ਹਰਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਰਖੀਐ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਪਵੈ ਰਸੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਏਵ ਨ ਉਤਰੈ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਉਤਾਰੇ ਧੋਇ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 472)

If the idea of pollution (*sūtak*) is admitted, it comes from everything. There are worms in cow-dung and wood (which are used for *chaukā*). The grain carries life within it. The first source of life is water which causes (the grain) to sprout. Thus, the source of *sūtak* is in the kitchen itself. O' Nanak, *sūtak* can be washed away by divine knowledge alone.

5.21. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੂੜੁ ॥  
 ਅਖੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਵੇਖਣਾ ਪਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਅ ਪਰ ਧਨ ਰੂਪੁ ॥  
 ਕੰਨੀ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਕੰਨਿ ਪੈ ਲਾਇਤਬਾਰੀ ਖਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਹੰਸਾ ਆਦਮੀ ਬਧੇ ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿ ਜਾਹਿ ॥੨॥ (SGGS, p. 472)

Avarice pollutes the mind and lies pollute the tongue. The eyes are defiled by looking at beautiful women with lust and at the wealth of others with greed. To hear slander is the source of pollution for ears. O' Nanak, the soul of a person thus polluted is bound for hell.

5.22. *Shalok M. 1(3)*

ਸਭੋ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਭਰਮੁ ਹੈ ਦੂਜੈ ਲਗੈ ਜਾਇ ॥  
 ਜੰਮਣੁ ਮਰਣਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਹੈ ਭਾਣੈ ਆਵੈ ਜਾਇ ॥  
 ਖਾਣਾ ਪੀਣਾ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰੁ ਹੈ ਦਿਤੋਨੁ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਸੰਬਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨ੍ਹੀ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਤਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਸੂਤਕੁ ਨਾਹਿ ॥੩॥ (SGGS, p. 472)

The very idea of *sūtak* is an illusion; it is mal-affiliation. Human beings are born and they die in accordance with the divine order; they come and go in accordance with the divine will. All food created by God for subsistence is pure. For the *Gurmukhs* who know this, there is no *sūtak*, O' Nanak.

5.23. *Shalok M. 1(2)*

ਭੰਡਿ ਜੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਨਿੰਮੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਮੰਗਣੁ ਵੀਆਹੁ ॥  
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਦੋਸਤੀ ਭੰਡਹੁ ਚਲੈ ਰਾਹੁ ॥  
 ਭੰਡੁ ਮੁਆ ਭੰਡੁ ਭਾਲੀਐ ਭੰਡਿ ਹੋਵੈ ਬੰਧਾਨੁ ॥  
 ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੰਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨ ॥  
 ਭੰਡਹੁ ਹੀ ਭੰਡੁ ਉਪਜੈ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਝੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਭੰਡੈ ਬਾਹਰਾ ਏਕੋ ਸਚਾ ਸੋਇ ॥ (SGGS, p. 473)

Conceived by a woman, man is born to a woman; he is betrothed and married to a woman. Through man's union with woman continues the propagation of humankind. When a woman dies, her husband looks for another wife; through a new woman his sexual desire is disciplined. Why should the woman who gives birth to *rājān* (whose birth is regarded

as noble) be reviled? Women themselves are born to women and there is none who is not born of a woman. The only exception to this, O' Nanak, is the True Lord (who is never born).

#### 5.24. *Shalok s 1*

ਆਪੇ ਭਾਂਡੇ ਸਾਜਿਅਨੁ ਆਪੇ ਪੂਰਣੁ ਦੇਇ॥  
 ਇਕਨ੍ਹੇ ਦੁਧੁ ਸਮਾਈਐ ਇਕਿ ਚੁਲ੍ਹੈ ਰਹਨਿ ਚੜੇ॥  
 ਇਕਿ ਨਿਹਾਲੀ ਪੈ ਸਵਨਿ ਇਕਿ ਉਪਰਿ ਰਹਨਿ ਖੜੇ॥  
 ਤਿਨ੍ਹ ਸਵਾਰੇ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਜਿਨ੍ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰੇ॥੧॥ (SGGS, p. 475)

God fashions all vessels and fills them. Some contain milk in them and some are constantly over the fire. Some sleep under quilts, and some keep standing to keep watch over them. The Lord grooms those to whom He is gracious.

### 6. *Anand*

Recited on various occasions everyday, the *Anand* is not only the most lyrical but also the most representative composition of Guru Amar Das. The last two of its 40 *pauris* are by Guru Ram Das and Guru Arjan. Guru Amar Das sings of the bliss that comes on realizing God. On remaining with Him all sorrows are forgotten. With God on his side all his affairs are set right. All gifts come from Him and He bestows the supreme gift of singing His praises with the Name lodged in the heart. The True Name removes all hunger, and peace comes to the mind. The *sants* should love the *shabad*, with the Name as their support. They could overpower the five adversaries and subdue the fear of Death. The Name is received through God's grace as the source of peace and bliss.

People talk of *anand* but *anand* is found through the Guru and his grace. All sins are washed away, and one's eyes are opened to *giān*. Attachment to the worldly things is dissolved. This is the *anand* that one experiences through the Guru. Only they know it who receive it through God's grace by appropriating the Name and accepting His will.

Guru Amar Das invites the *sants* (Sikhs) to sing the praises of God in congregation. God is realized by entrusting the body and mind and all the material resources to Him, and by obeying His *bukam*. To sing the true *bānī* is to obey the Guru's *bukam*. God is not found by clever talk. The attractive *māyā*, is created by Him as the source of illusion to lure human beings. To come out of this sweet attachment, one has to appropriate the truth. The instruction of the Guru alone helps in the end.

God is inaccessible and unseeable and He alone knows Himself. The living beings are His creation, and He cares for them. Through the grace of the Guru, the True One is lodged in the heart. They who find the True Guru become free from greed, attachment and pride. The way of the *bhagats* is different from that of all others. They discard greed, attachment, pride and thirst in a quiet way and follow the path which is sharper than the edge of the double-edged sword and narrower than the width of a hair. They are consumed by the desire to attain God. The way of the *bhagats* has been different from that of others throughout the ages. Guru Amar Das prays to God that he may follow His will. Only they whom He shows the right path follow His will. Only they meditate on God whom He attaches to the Name through His grace.

This song of joy is the *shabad* heard from the True Guru. It is lodged in the hearts of those for whom it is ordained by the divine court. The True Guru proclaims the *shabad* as the song of joy. They who meditate on God by turning to the Guru become pure. They who recite, hear, and lodge it in the heart become pure. The state of bliss (*sahaj*) does not spring from *karm-kāṇḍ*, and the fear of Death does not vanish without attaining this state. The mind made impure by fear can be washed clean by no means other than appropriation of the *shabad* and meditation on God. The fear vanishes only when the state of bliss springs from the grace of the Guru.

They who are clean from outside and dirty within, their life is wasted in a gamble. The thirst for *māyā* is a serious disease; it makes one oblivious of death. One does not listen to the supreme Name and wanders aimlessly. They who discard the truth and attach themselves to the false world, waste their life in a gamble. The inward and outward purity comes from following the way of the Guru. Absorption in the truth keeps all falsehood away. The Sikh of the Guru concentrates his mind on him. Discarding his self, he devotes himself to the Guru and knows no one else. They who turn away from the Guru find no refuge. They find no liberation elsewhere. If you think deeply you realize that there is no liberation without the True Guru.

Guru Amar Das invites the Sikhs to sing the *bāṇī* of the Guru which is supreme. Dyed in the love of God, they should sing His praises through the true *bāṇī*. He who appropriates the *shabad* of the Guru is absorbed in it. When the mind is attached to the *shabad*, one turns to the True One in loving devotion.

God created Shiva and Shakti and He governs the universe. He watches His sport. Only a few understand this by turning to the Guru. They who lodge the *shabad* in the heart, their attachment is snapped and they attain to liberation. The doer (*Kartā*) makes His devotees understand His *bukam*. The reality is never known without the Guru. He who is awakened by the Guru's grace dedicates himself to God and sings the nectar-like *bāṇī*. Only he who keeps awake throughout his life and remembers God day and night, comes to know the reality. He who remembers Him comes to no harm. They who are dedicated to God through the Guru's grace attain God in the midst of *māyā*. God, a priceless treasure, is found by meeting the True Guru. To him one offers one's head.

The human body comes into the world after the divine light is placed in it by God. Through the Guru's grace comes the realization that the world is transitory. What is ever-

lasting is the light placed in the body at the time of creation. Love springs from the realization of God within. He has made the body a temple. The divine music is heard through the Guru's *shabad* and by tasting the divine Name. God is the doer and through His grace one finds Him. Only he who devotes himself to the Guru becomes acceptable to God.

The light in the eyes has been placed to see nothing but God. The world around is a form of God; through it can He be seen. Through the grace of the Guru it is realized that God is one and there is no other reality. Without this realization the eyes remain blind. The ears are meant to hear the praises of the True Lord. He who hears the true *bāṇī* his mind and body are regenerated. By listening to the nectar-like Name the ears are purified; they are meant to hear the praises of the True Lord. Placing the soul in the body, God breathed air into it. The nine doors are shown by the air. The tenth door is revealed by the Guru.

For Guru Ram Das, the *Anand* is the true song of joy to be sung in the true house where truth is meditated upon. We may be sure that this true house is the *saṅgat*. Guru Arjan invites the Sikhs to listen to the *Anand* so that all their wishes are fulfilled, they realize God and all their sorrows disappear. The True Guru is present in this *bāṇī*; he who listens to it and utters it becomes pure. Guru Arjan affirms that by attachment to the feet of the Guru the divine music of joy is struck within.

#### 6.1. *Paurī* 1

ਅਨੰਦੁ ਭਇਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਮਾਏ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਤ ਪਾਇਆ ਸਰਜ ਸੇਤੀ ਮਨਿ ਵਜੀਆ ਵਾਧਾਈਆ ॥  
 ਰਾਗ ਰਤਨ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਪਰੀਆ ਸਬਦ ਗਾਵਣ ਆਈਆ ॥  
 ਸਬਦੇ ਤ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਹਰੀ ਕੇਰਾ ਮਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਵਸਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਮੈ ਪਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 917)

It is all bliss, O' my mother, now that I have found the True Guru. I have found the True Guru and blissful music is struck

in my mind with ease. The gem like *Rāgs* and their families have come to sing the *shabad*. Sing the *shabads* in praise of God to lodge Him in the mind. It is all bliss, says Nanak, now that I have found the True Guru.

### 6.2. *Paurī* 4

ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੈ ॥

ਸਾਚੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਭੁਖਾ ਸਭਿ ਗਵਾਈਆ ॥

ਕਰਿ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਸੁਖ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ ਵਸਿਆ ਜਿਨਿ ਇਛਾ ਸਭਿ ਪੁਜਾਈਆ ॥

ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਣੁ ਕੀਤਾ ਗੁਰੂ ਵਿਟਹੁ ਜਿਸ ਦੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਵਡਿਆਈਆ ॥

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਪਰਹੁ ਪਿਆਰੈ ॥

ਸਾਚਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਆਧਾਰੈ ॥੪॥

(SGGS, p. 917)

My only support is the True Name, a support that has appeased all hunger. My mind is stilled by the peace fulfilling all my desire. I am ever a sacrifice to the Guru whose greatness is reflected in my state. Listen to me, O' *sanis* (Sikhs), says Nanak, cultivate love for the *shabad*. The True Name is my support.

### 6.3. *Paurī* 9

ਆਵਹੁ ਸੰਤ ਪਿਆਰਿਹੋ ਅਕਥ ਕੀ ਕਰਹੁ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥

ਕਰਹੁ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਅਕਥ ਕੇਰੀ ਕਿਤੁ ਦੁਆਰੈ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਧਨੁ ਸਭੁ ਸਚਿਪਿ ਗੁਰ ਕਉ ਹੁਕਮਿ ਮੰਨਿਐ ਪਾਈਐ ॥

ਹੁਕਮੁ ਮੰਨਿਹੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇਰਾ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਕਥਿਹੁ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥੯॥

(SGGS, p. 918)

Come, my dear *sanis* (Sikhs) to talk of the ineffable Lord. How do we talk of the ineffable Lord and how can we find Him? Dedicate your body, mind and wealth to the Guru and follow his instruction to meet the Lord. Follow the Guru's instruction and sing the true *bāṇī*. Listen O' *sanis*, says Nanak, this is the way to talk of the Lord.

### 6.4. *Paurī* 14

ਚਾਲਾ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ਭਗਤਾਹੁ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਿਖਮ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲਣਾ ॥

ਲਬੁ ਲੋਭੁ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੁ ਤਜਿ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਬੋਲਣਾ ॥

ਖੰਨਿਅਹੁ ਤਿਖੀ ਵਾਲਹੁ ਨਿਕੀ ਏਤੁ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਜਾਣਾ ॥



ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜਿਨੀ ਆਪੁ ਤਜਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਵਾਸਨਾ ਸਮਾਣੀ॥  
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਚਾਲ ਭਗਤਾ ਜੁਗਹੁ ਜੁਗੁ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ॥੧੪॥

(SGGS, pp. 918-19)

Distinguished is the way of the *bhagats* (Sikhs). It is a hard way. They discard greed, pride and desire, and do not indulge in useless talk. Sharper than the edge of the double-edged sword and narrower than the width of a hair is the way they follow. By the Guru's grace, they who renounce the self are merged with God. The path of the *bhagats*, says Nanak, has remained distinguished throughout the cosmic ages.

#### 6.5. *Paurī* 21

ਹੋਵੈ ਤ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਕੋਈ ਜੀਅਹੁ ਰਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਲੇ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਚਰਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਧਿਆਏ ਅੰਤਰ ਆਤਮੈ ਸਮਾਲੇ॥  
ਆਪੁ ਛਡਿ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੈ ਪਰਣੈ ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਏ॥  
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਸੰਤਹੁ ਸੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਹੋਏ॥੨੧॥

(SGGS, pp. 919-20)

The Sikh who wishes to be present with the Guru should concentrate his mind on the Guru. He should meditate on his feet and lodge him in his heart. Renouncing his self he should remain attached to the Guru and recognize no one else. Listen, O' *sants*, says Nanak, this is the way to be present with the Guru.

#### 6.6. *Paurī* 22

ਜੇ ਕੋ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਵੇਖੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਵੈ॥  
ਪਾਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਹੋਰ ਥੈ ਕੋਈ ਪੁਛਹੁ ਬਿਬੇਕੀਆ ਜਾਏ॥  
ਅਨੇਕ ਜੂਨੀ ਭਰਮਿ ਆਵੈ ਵਿਣੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਏ॥  
ਫਿਰਿ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਪਾਏ ਲਾਗਿ ਚਰਣੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਣਾਏ॥  
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ਦੇਖਹੁ ਵਿਣੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਪਾਏ॥੨੨॥

(SGGS, p. 920)

He who turns away from the Guru can never attain liberation. He would find liberation nowhere else: ask the ones who have sense of discrimination. He would wander in many lives, finding no liberation without the True Guru. Ultimately, by attaching himself to the Guru's feet and listening to the Guru's

*sbabad*, he would find liberation. Mark well (O' *sants*), says Nanak, no one attains liberation without the True Guru.

### 6.7. Paurī 23

ਆਵਹੁ ਸਿਖ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਹੋ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਾਣੀਆ ਸਿਰਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਜਿਨ ਕਉ ਨਦਰਿ ਕਰਮੁ ਹੋਵੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਤਿਨਾ ਸਮਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਪੀਵਹੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਦਾ ਰਹਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਰੰਗਿ ਜਪਿਹੁ ਸਾਰੰਗਪਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਦਾ ਗਾਵਹੁ ਏਹ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥੨੩॥ (SGGS, p. 920)

Come, O' dear Sikhs of the Guru and sing the true *bāṇī*. Sing the *bāṇī* of the Guru which is the supreme *bāṇī*. It is lodged in the hearts of those to whom God is gracious. Drink this nectar, remain dyed in the love of God, and meditate on the Sustainer of the Earth. Always sing this true *bāṇī*, says Nanak.

### 6.8. Paurī 24

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਿਨਾ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਹੈ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਕਚੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਕਹਦੇ ਕਚੇ ਸੁਣਦੇ ਕਚੇ ਕਚੀ ਆਖਿ ਵਖਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਿਤ ਕਰਹਿ ਰਸਨਾ ਕਹਿਆ ਕਛੂ ਨ ਜਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਚਿਤੁ ਜਿਨ ਕਾ ਹਿਰਿ ਲਇਆ ਮਾਇਆ ਬੋਲਨਿ ਪਏ ਰਵਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥੨੪॥

(SGGS, p. 920)

Other than the *bāṇī* of the Guru, there is no true *bāṇī*. All other *bāṇī* is unripe. They who recite and they who listen to it are unripe; they who have composed it are unripe. They utter 'bar, bar' with their tongue but they do not understand. Their mind remains engrossed in *māyā* even when they recite with ease. Other than the *bāṇī* of the true Guru, says Nanak, there is no true *bāṇī*.

### 6.9. Paurī 33

ਏ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਤੁਮ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਖੀ ਤਾ ਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਖੀ ਤੁਧੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਤਾ ਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਮਾਤਾ ਆਪੇ ਪਿਤਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਜੀਉ ਉਪਾਇ ਜਗਤੁ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਬੁਝਿਆ ਤਾ ਚਲਤੁ ਹੋਆ ਚਲਤੁ ਨਦਰੀ ਆਇਆ ॥

ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਕਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਰਚਿਆ,  
ਜੋਤਿ ਰਾਖੀ ਤਾ ਤੂ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥੩੩॥ (SGGS, p. 921)

You came into the world, O' my body, when God placed the light in you. Only when He placed the light within, you came into the world. God Himself is the mother, He Himself is the father, who created the soul and showed the world. By the Guru's grace, it is seen as transitory, like a show. The foundation of creation was laid, says Nanak, when God placed the light in you and you came into the world.

#### 6.10. Paurī 39

ਏਹੁ ਸਾਚਾ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਸਾਚੈ ਘਰਿ ਗਾਵਹੁ ॥  
ਗਾਵਹੁ ਤ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਘਰਿ ਸਾਚੈ ਜਿਥੈ ਸਦਾ ਸਚੁ ਧਿਆਵਹੇ ॥  
ਸਚੈ ਧਿਆਵਹਿ ਜਾ ਤੁਧੁ ਭਾਵਹਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਿਨਾ ਬੁਝਾਵਹੇ ॥  
ਇਹੁ ਸਚੁ ਸਭਨਾ ਕਾ ਖਸਮੁ ਹੈ ਜਿਸੁ ਬਖਸੇ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਪਾਵਹੇ ॥  
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਸਚੁ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਸਚੈ ਘਰਿ ਗਾਵਹੇ ॥੩੪॥ (SGGS, p. 922)

Sing this true song in praise of God in the true house. Sing this song in the true house where (the Sikhs) meditate on the True One all the time. They meditate on the True One when it pleases You and when the Guru makes them understand. This truth is the master of all. Only he receives it upon whom it is bestowed by God. He sings this true song in the true house, says Nanak.

#### 6.11. Paurī 40

ਅਨਦੁ ਸੁਣਹੁ ਵਡਭਾਗੀਹੋ ਸਗਲ ਮਨੋਰਥ ਪੂਰੇ ॥  
ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਉਤਰੇ ਸਗਲ ਵਿਸ਼੍ਵਰੇ ॥  
ਦੂਖ ਰੋਗ ਸੰਤਾਪ ਉਤਰੇ ਸੁਣੀ ਸਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
ਸੰਤ ਸਾਜਨ ਭਏ ਸਰਸੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣੀ ॥  
ਸੁਣਤੇ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਕਹਤੇ ਪਵਿਤ੍ਰ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰੇ ॥  
ਬਿਨਵੰਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗੁਰ ਚਰਣ ਲਾਗੇ ਵਾਜੇ ਅਨਹਦ ਤੂਰੇ ॥੪੦॥

(SGGS, p. 922)

Listen to the *Anand* O' the fortunate ones; all your wishes would be fulfilled. I have found the Supreme Being and all my sorrows are gone. Suffering and ailment have ended by listening to the true *bāṇī*. The *saints* and friends are happy to receive it from the Guru. Purified are all and redeemed

are all who hear it or recite it in the Guru's presence. By attaching oneself to the Guru's feet, says Nanak, unstruck music is heard aloud.

## 7. *Lāvān*

The second *Chhant* of Guru Ram Das in *Rāg Sūbī* is generally referred to as *Lāvān*. As leaders of a house holding fraternity, the Gurus were interested in the rites of the passage: birth, marriage and death. Guru Nanak showed interest in the songs of marriage and mourning after death. Guru Amar Das's *Anand* is believed to have been composed on the occasion of the birth of a grandson. It began to be recited on several kinds of occasions quite early in the history of the Sikhs. The *Lāvān* of Guru Ram Das is now used for the Sikh ceremony of marriage. Therefore, it has a peculiar importance in the evolution of the Sikh rites of the passage. The metaphors come from the ceremony of marriage in a spiritual voyage towards God. Significantly, the number of rounds is four and not seven, the number in the marriage performed by a Brahman.

### 7.1. *Sūbī M. 4, Chhant 2*

ਹਰਿ ਪਹਿਲੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਪਰਵਿਰਤੀ ਕਰਮ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਬਾਣੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ਵੇਦੁ ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਹੁ ਪਾਪ ਤਜਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਧਰਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵਹੁ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਆਰਾਧਹੁ ਸਭਿ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਪਾਪ ਗਵਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਸਹਜ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੋਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਮਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ॥  
 ਜਨੁ ਕਰੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਲਾਵ ਪਹਿਲੀ ਆਰੰਭੁ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, pp. 773-74)

For the first round, God promulgates the principle of active life. His *bāṇī* for you is the *Veda* and the source of *dharm*; it is the means of discarding sin. Appropriating *dharm*, meditate on the name of God found commendable in the scriptures. All sins are washed away by meditating on the True Guru who is Perfect. Joy comes through good fortune

and God tastes sweet. The first round, says Nanak, is the foundation of the voyage (*kāṛ*), which stands for marriage too).

## 7.2.

ਹਰਿ ਦੂਜੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਨਿਰਭਉ ਭੈ ਮਨੁ ਹੋਇ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੈਲੁ ਗਵਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਭਉ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਵੇਖੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਹਦੂਰੇ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਆਤਮ ਰਾਮੁ ਪਸਾਰਿਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਸਰਬ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰੇ ॥  
 ਅੰਤਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਏਕੋ ਮਿਲਿ ਹਰਿ ਜਨ ਮੰਗਲ ਗਾਏ ॥  
 ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੂਜੀ ਲਾਵ ਚਲਾਈ ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਵਜਾਏ ॥੨॥

(SGGS, p. 774)

For the second round, the awe of the Fearless One is lodged in the mind by meeting the true Guru and the dirt of *haumai* is removed. The purifying awe is experienced by singing the praises of God in his presence. God is within oneself and He fills all space. Outside and within there is the Only One God; His praises are sung in association with His devotees. The second round has started with the divine *shabad*.

## 7.3.

ਹਰਿ ਤੀਜੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਮਨਿ ਚਾਉ ਭਇਆ ਬੈਰਾਗੀਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਹਰਿ ਮੇਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਇਆ ਮੁਖਿ ਬੋਲੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਜਨਾ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਪਾਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਕਬੀਐ ਅਕਥ ਕਹਾਣੀ ॥  
 ਹਿਰਦੈ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਉਪਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਜਪੀਐ ਮਸਤਕਿ ਭਾਗੁ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਤੀਜੀ ਲਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਨਿ ਬੈਰਾਗੁ ਜੀਉ ॥੩॥

(SGGS, p. 774)

For the third round, love of God wells up with the feeling of *baīrāg*. By meeting the *saṁts*, God is found through good fortune. The praises of God are sung through the divine *bāṇī*. The *saṁts* talk of the ineffable God. The love of God springs up in the heart and God is remembered through good fortune. God's devotee, Nanak, utters the third round that the love of God wells up through the feeling of *baīrāg*.

7.4.

ਹਰਿ ਚਉਥੜੀ ਲਾਵ ਮਨਿ ਸਹਜੁ ਭਇਆ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸੁਭਾਇ ਹਰਿ ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਬਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਜੀਉ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਇਆ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਭਾਇਆ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਈ ॥  
 ਮਨ ਚਿੰਦਿਆ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਜੀ ਵਾਧਾਈ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਠਾਕੁਰਿ ਕਾਜੁ ਰਚਾਇਆ ਧਨ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮਿ ਵਿਗਾਸੀ ॥  
 ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਚਉਥੀ ਲਾਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਅਵਿਨਾਸੀ ॥੪॥

(SGGS, p. 774)

For the fourth round, *sahaj* enters the mind and God is realized. He becomes sweet for the mind and the body. My Master is pleased to make Him sweet; I meditate on Him day and night. All my wishes are fulfilled and I have received congratulations through the Name. The Lord Master has accomplished the task and the bride's heart is suffused with happiness through the Name. God's devotee, Nanak, utters the fourth round: 'I have found God, the eternal Master'.

## 8. *Sukhmani*

The best known of Guru Arjan's compositions, the *Sukhmani* (Jewel of Bliss), is quietly read in many situations everyday. In 24 *Ashtpadis* and about the same number of *shaloks*, it expounds the bliss that comes from the Name Divine and brings peace to the heart of the devotee. Regarded as a comprehensive statement of Sikh philosophy, it dwells on God, the Name, the Guru, the *shabad*, the *bukam* and the *nadar*. God is both *nirgun* and *sargun*, with and without attributes. Contemplation of His attributes is an essential form of devotion. He is the true Guru, but the divinely inspired human Guru is equally important. The Guru's instruction is indispensable for liberation. The *shabad* refers to divine self-revelation and it refers more emphatically to the Guru's *shabad* or *Gurbāṇī*. The *Sukhmani* dwells on *bukam* and *bhāṇā*, laying equal emphasis on divine power and divine grace. The *bhāṇā* of the Compassionate Lord tends to merge into his grace (*nadar*, *kirpā*, *dayā*, *karm*).

Apart from these key constituents of Sikh philosophy, there is a great emphasis on *sādh-saṅgat*, the God-enlightened (*Brahm-Giānī*), the liberated-in-life (*jīvan-muktā*), the *saṁts*, the Sikhs of the Guru, and supplication (*ardās*). The *Sukhmanī* itself is a source of liberation as *Gurbānī*. An *ardās* of the *Sukhmanī* is now recited as a prelude to the formal Sikh *Ardās*. Then there are other significant ideas in the *Sukhmanī*. Humility is an essential attitude for receiving grace. Whoever reckons himself low is really supreme. The true devotee becomes dust of the feet of others. Worthless is the body that does not engage in doing good for others. For the God-enlightened, all are alike; the true *Vaishnava* remains engaged in action without expecting any reward; the true *Pandit* imparts teaching to all the four castes; the Name is open to the lowest of the low (*chaṇḍāl*); there is no rancour in the hearts of those who lodge God in their heart; between the *Sādh* (Guru) and God there is no distance. God's devotee is in essence identical with God.

### 8.1. *Shalok* 2

ਦੀਨ ਦਰਦ ਦੁਖ ਭੰਜਨਾ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਨਾਥ ਅਨਾਥ ॥  
ਸਰਣਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ਆਇਓ ਨਾਨਕ ਕੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਸਾਥ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, pp. 263-64)

You are the destroyer of the pain and suffering of the poor.  
You are in every heart and there is no one above You. I have  
taken refuge with You, O' Lord, be with Nanak.

### 8.2. *Ashṭpadī* 2(1)

ਜਹ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਸੁਤ ਮੀਤ ਨ ਭਾਈ ॥  
ਮਨ ਉਹਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੇਰੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਹਾਈ ॥  
ਜਹ ਮਹਾ ਭਇਆਨ ਦੂਤ ਜਮ ਦਲੈ ॥  
ਤਹ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੰਗਿ ਤੇਰੈ ਚਲੈ ॥  
ਜਹ ਮੁਸਕਲ ਹੋਵੈ ਅਤਿ ਭਾਰੀ ॥  
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਖਿਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਉਧਾਰੀ ॥  
ਅਨਿਕ ਪੁਨਹਚਰਨ ਕਰਤ ਨਹੀ ਤਰੈ ॥  
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਕੋਟਿ ਪਾਪ ਪਰਹਰੈ ॥

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਪਾਵਹੁ ਸੂਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 264)

Where there is no mother, no father, no son, no friend and no brother to support you, there the Name remains with you. Where the dreadful messenger of Death tramples you, there only the Name remains with you. Where you are in terrible trouble, the Lord's Name comes for your redemption in a moment. Where many rituals fail, the Name of God removes millions of sins. Turn to the Guru, O' my mind, and meditate on the Name. (By doing so) Nanak, you will find many comforts.

### 8.3. *Ashṭpadi* 3(1)

ਜਾਪ ਤਾਪ ਗਿਆਨ ਸਭਿ ਧਿਆਨ ॥

ਖਟ ਸਾਸਤ੍ਰ ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਵਖਿਆਨ ॥

ਜੋਗ ਅਭਿਆਸ ਕਰਮ ਧ੍ਰਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ ॥

ਸਗਲ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਬਨ ਮਧੇ ਫਿਰਿਆ ॥

ਅਨਿਕ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਰ ਕੀਏ ਬਹੁ ਜਤਨਾ ॥

ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਹੋਮੇ ਬਹੁ ਰਤਨਾ ॥

ਸਰੀਰੁ ਕਟਾਇ ਹੋਮੈ ਕਰਿ ਰਾਤੀ ॥

ਵਰਤ ਨੇਮ ਕਰੈ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤੀ ॥

ਨਹੀ ਤੁਲਿ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਬੀਚਾਰ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੀਐ ਇਕ ਬਾਰ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 265)

Recitation of sacred books, penance, discourse on divine knowledge, meditation, exposition of the six schools of philosophy, Shastras and Smritis, austerities, ceremonial rituals, renunciation, wandering in forests, and many other kinds of performance, charities, oblations, cutting the body into pieces for sacrifice to the fire, fasting and vows of several kinds – all these are not equal to the Name of Rām, even if it is uttered only once.

### 8.4. *Ashṭpadi* 3(8)

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸ਼ਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥

ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥

ਸਗਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਮਹਿ ਉਤਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ ॥

ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰਿਆ ॥



ਸਗਲ ਉਦਮ ਮਹਿ ਉਦਮੁ ਭਲਾ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਜੀਅ ਸਦਾ ॥  
 ਸਗਲ ਬਾਨੀ ਮਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਨੀ ॥  
 ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਜਸੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਰਸਨ ਬਖਾਨੀ ॥  
 ਸਗਲ ਥਾਨ ਤੇ ਓਹੁ ਉਤਮ ਥਾਨੁ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਹ ਘਟਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, p. 266)

Of all *dharm*s, the supreme *dharm* is meditation on God's name and ethical conduct. Of all religious rites the supreme rite is to remove the dirt of *durmat* through association with *sādh*s (Sikhs). Of all efforts, the best effort is to repeat the name of God. Of all *bān*s, the best is the *amrit-bān*i (of the Gurus) which is in the praise of God. Of all places, the best place, O' Nanak, is the one in which there is the abode of the Name.

#### 8.5. *Ashṭpadi* 4(8)

ਤੂੰ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਤੁਮ ਪਹਿ ਅਰਦਾਸਿ ॥  
 ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਤੇਰੀ ਰਾਸਿ ॥  
 ਤੁਮ ਮਾਤ ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਤੇਰੇ ॥  
 ਤੁਮਰੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਮਹਿ ਸੂਖ ਘਨੇਰੇ ॥  
 ਕੋਇ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਤੁਮਰਾ ਅੰਤੁ ॥  
 ਉਚੇ ਤੇ ਉਚਾ ਭਗਵੰਤੁ ॥  
 ਸਗਲ ਸਮਗ੍ਰੀ ਤੁਮਰੈ ਸੂਤ੍ਰਿ ਧਾਰੀ ॥  
 ਤੁਮ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਸੁ ਆਗਿਆਫਾਰੀ ॥  
 ਤੁਮਰੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਤੁਮ ਹੀ ਜਾਨੀ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾਸ ਸਦਾ ਕੁਰਬਾਨੀ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, p. 268)

You are the Lord and my supplication is addressed to You. The soul and the body belong to You. You are our mother and father and we are your children. There are many comforts in Your grace. None knows your limit. You Lord are higher than the highest. The entire creation is under Your control and functions in accordance with Your command. Your state and extent is known to You alone. Your servant, Nanak, is ever a sacrifice to You.

8.6. *Ashtpadī* 7(1)

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਮੁਖ ਊਜਲ ਹੋਤ ॥

ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਮਲੁ ਸਗਲੀ ਖੋਤ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਟੈ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੈ ਸੁਗਿਆਨੁ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਬੁਝੈ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨੇਰਾ ॥

ਸਾਧਸੰਗਿ ਸਭੁ ਹੋਤ ਨਿਬੇਰਾ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਪਾਏ ਨਾਮ ਰਤਨੁ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਏਕ ਊਪਰਿ ਜਤਨੁ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਮਹਿਮਾ ਬਰਨੈ ਕਉਨੁ ਪ੍ਰਾਨੀ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਨੀ ॥੧॥ (SGGS, p. 271)

The countenance becomes bright through association with the *Sādh* (Guru). All dirt is removed through association with the *Sādh*. Through association with him, all pride is subdued. Divine knowledge comes through association with the *Sādh*. Through association with him, God becomes close. All matters are settled through association with the *Sādh*. Through association with him, one finds the gem of the Name. One is dedicated to the one alone through association with the *Sādh*. The praise of the *Sādh* cannot be adequately expressed. It merges with the praises of the Lord.

8.7. *Ashtpadī* 8(1)

ਬੈਸਨੋ ਸੋ ਜਿਸੁ ਊਪਰਿ ਸੁਪ੍ਰਸੰਨ ॥

ਬਿਸਨ ਕੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਤੇ ਹੋਇ ਭਿੰਨ ॥

ਕਰਮ ਕਰਤ ਹੋਵੈ ਨਿਹਕਰਮ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਬੈਸਨੋ ਕਾ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਧਰਮ ॥

ਕਾਹੂ ਫਲ ਕੀ ਇਛਾ ਨਹੀ ਬਾਛੈ ॥

ਕੇਵਲ ਭਗਤਿ ਕੀਰਤਨ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਾਚੈ ॥

ਮਨ ਤਨ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਗੋਪਾਲ ॥

ਸਭ ਊਪਰਿ ਹੋਵਤ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ॥

ਆਪਿ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਅਵਰਹ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਾਵੈ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਓਹੁ ਬੈਸਨੋ ਪਰਮ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਵੈ ॥੨॥

ਭਗਉਤੀ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਭਗਤਿ ਕਾ ਰੰਗੁ ॥

(SGGS, p. 274)

A Vaishnava is he with whom the Lord is pleased. He is indifferent to *māyā*. He acts selflessly. Such a Vaishnava has

a pure *dharm*. He entertains no desire for reward. He is dedicated solely to singing God's praises. He remembers God with his body and soul. He is kind to all. He holds fast to the Name and induces others to appropriate the Name. Nanak, such a Vaishnava attains the supreme state. Such a *Bhagauti* is lovingly dedicated to *Bhagwant*.

#### 8.8. *Ashtpadī* 10(1)

ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਹੋਏ ਪੂਜਾਰੀ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਆਚਾਰ ਬਿਉਹਾਰੀ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਭਏ ਤੀਰਥ ਵਾਸੀ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਬਨ ਭ੍ਰਮਹਿ ਉਦਾਸੀ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਬੇਦ ਕੇ ਸ੍ਰੋਤੇ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਤਪੀਸੁਰ ਹੋਤੇ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਆਤਮ ਧਿਆਨੁ ਧਾਰਹਿ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਕਥਿ ਕਾਥਿ ਬੀਚਾਰਹਿ॥  
 ਕਈ ਕੋਟਿ ਨਵਤਨ ਨਾਮ ਧਿਆਵਹਿ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕਰਤੇ ਕਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਵਹਿ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 275)

There are millions of worshippers, and millions of performers of traditional rites. Millions live in places of pilgrimage and millions roam in forests as renunciates. There are millions of listeners of the Vedas and millions of anchorites. Millions remain engaged in meditation and millions compose and reflect on their poetry. Millions recite His names. (But) none knows the limit of the Creator, says Nanak.

#### 8.9. *Shalok* 1

ਸੁਖੀ ਬਸੈ ਮਸਕੀਨੀਆ ਆਪੁ ਨਿਵਾਰਿ ਤਲੇ॥  
 ਬਡੇ ਬਡੇ ਅਹੰਕਾਰੀਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਗਰਬਿ ਗਲੇ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 278)

The humble live in peace, keeping their 'self' subdued. The haughty, O' Nanak, are consumed by their own intense pride.

#### 8.10. *Ashtpadī* 13(1)

ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਆਰਜਾ ਘਟੈ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਜਮ ਤੇ ਨਹੀ ਛੁਟੈ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਭੁ ਜਾਇ॥  
 ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਨਰਕ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਇ॥

ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਮਤਿ ਹੋਇ ਮਲੀਨ ॥

ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਸੋਭਾ ਤੇ ਹੀਨ ॥

ਸੰਤ ਕੇ ਹਤੇ ਕਉ ਰਖੈ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਸੰਤ ਕੈ ਦੂਖਨਿ ਥਾਨ ਭ੍ਰਸਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਸੰਤ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਜੇ ਕਰੈ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੰਤਸੰਗਿ ਨਿੰਦਕੁ ਭੀ ਤਰੈ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 279)

The slanderer of the *Sant* shortens his own life. The slanderer of the *Sant* never escapes the noose of Death. The slanderer of the *Sant* loses all peace. The slanderer of the *Sant* goes to hell. The understanding of the slanderer of the *Sant* remains obscure. He who incurs the *Sant's* displeasure is saved by none. The place where the slanderer of the *Sant* sits is defiled. If the *Sant* shows compassion, O' Nanak, even the slanderer is redeemed through his grace.

#### 8.11. *Ashtpadī* 15(8)

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਪਰਤੀਤਿ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਆਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚੀਤਿ ॥

ਭਗਤੁ ਭਗਤੁ ਸੁਨੀਐ ਤਿਹੁ ਲੋਇ ॥

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਏਕੋ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਸਚੁ ਕਰਣੀ ਸਚੁ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਰਹਤ ॥

ਸਚੁ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਸਤਿ ਮੁਖਿ ਕਹਤ ॥

ਸਾਚੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਿ ਸਾਚਾ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥

ਸਚੁ ਵਰਤੈ ਸਾਚਾ ਪਾਸਾਰੁ ॥

ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਚੁ ਕਰਿ ਜਾਤਾ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਸਚਿ ਸਮਾਤਾ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, p. 283)

He who has faith in the Guru remembers the Lord. We hear of *bhagats* in all the three world. The real devotee of God is he who lodges the Only One in his heart. His deeds are true, and true is his way of life (*rabit*). In his heart is truth, and truth is on his tongue. His vision is true, and true is his form. His dealings are true and he spreads truth. He who knows the Supreme Being as True is absorbed in truth.

#### 8.12. *Ashtpadī* 17(3)

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਆਗਿਆਕਾਰੀ ॥

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸਦਾ ਪੂਜਾਰੀ ॥

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੈ ਮਨਿ ਪਰਤੀਤਿ ॥

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਰੀਤਿ ॥

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਉ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਾਨੈ ਸੰਗਿ ॥

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਾ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਨਾਮ ਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ॥

ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪਾਲਨਹਾਰਾ ॥

ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਰਾਖੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰਾ ॥

ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਜਿਸੁ ਦਇਆ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਧਾਰੈ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਮਾਰੈ ॥੩॥

(SGGS, p. 285)

The servant of the Master is obedient. The servant of the Master always adores him. The servant of the Master has faith in him. The servant of the Master follows the pure way. The servant of the Master acts as if he is in the presence of the Master. The servant of the Master loves the Name. The Master cherishes the servant and protects his honour. The Master is compassionate towards the servant. Nanak, the real servant is he who remembers the Master all the time.

### 8.13. *Ashṭpādī* 17(5)

ਨੀਕੀ ਕੀਰੀ ਮਹਿ ਕਲ ਰਾਖੈ ॥

ਭਸਮ ਕਰੈ ਲਸਕਰ ਕੋਟਿ ਲਾਖੈ ॥

ਜਿਸ ਕਾ ਸਾਸੁ ਨ ਕਾਢਤ ਆਪਿ ॥

ਤਾ ਕਉ ਰਾਖਤ ਦੇ ਕਰਿ ਹਾਥ ॥

ਮਾਨਸ ਜਤਨ ਕਰਤ ਬਹੁ ਭਾਤਿ ॥

ਤਿਸ ਕੇ ਕਰਤਬ ਬਿਰਥੇ ਜਾਤਿ ॥

ਮਾਰੈ ਨ ਰਾਖੈ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਸਰਬ ਜੀਆ ਕਾ ਰਾਖਾ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਕਾਰੇ ਸੋਚ ਕਰਹਿ ਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀ ॥

ਜਪਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਅਲਖ ਵਿਡਾਣੀ ॥੫॥

(SGGS, pp. 285-86)

The tiny ant is empowered by the Lord to reduce an army of millions to ashes. The Lord protects with His own hand the one whose life He does not like to take. A human being tries in various ways but all his effort is in vain. None but the Lord kills or keeps. He is the Protector of all. Why are you anxious, O' mortal? asks Nanak; meditate on the Unseeable Lord.

# 8.14. *Shalok*

ਸਤਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਨਾਉ ॥  
ਤਿਸ ਕੈ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਿਖੁ ਉਧਰੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਉ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 286)

He who has realized the True Being, his name is the True Guru. The Sikhs have been redeemed along with him. Nanak, I sing the praises of God.

# 8.15. *Ashtpadī* 18(1)

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਕੀ ਕਰੈ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲ ॥  
ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਗੁਰੁ ਸਦਾ ਦਇਆਲ ॥  
ਸਿਖ ਕੀ ਗੁਰੁ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰੈ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਬਚਨੀ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਉਚਰੈ ॥  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਕੇ ਬੰਧਨ ਕਾਟੈ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਿਖੁ ਬਿਕਾਰ ਤੇ ਹਾਟੈ ॥  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਕਉ ਨਾਮ ਧਨੁ ਦੇਇ ॥  
ਗੁਰ ਕਾ ਸਿਖੁ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਹੋ ॥  
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਕਾ ਹਲਤੁ ਪਲਤੁ ਸਵਾਰੈ ॥  
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸਿਖ ਕਉ ਜੀਅ ਨਾਲਿ ਸਮਾਰੈ ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 286)

The True Guru looks after the Sikh. The Guru is always kind to the *sevak*. The Guru removes the dirt of the Sikh's *durmat*. He utters the Name through his utterance. The True Guru cuts off the Sikh's fetters. The Sikh of the Guru desists from evil acts. The True Guru gives the wealth of the Name to the Sikh. The Guru's Sikh is extremely fortunate. The True Guru settles the affairs of the Sikh in this world and the next. Nanak, the True Guru grooms his Sikh with the fullest involvement.

# 8.16. *Ashtpadī* 18(8)

ਨਿਰਗੁਨੁ ਆਪਿ ਸਰਗੁਨੁ ਭੀ ਓਹੀ ॥  
ਕਲਾ ਧਾਰਿ ਜਿਨਿ ਸਗਲੀ ਮੋਹੀ ॥  
ਅਪਨੇ ਚਰਿਤ ਪ੍ਰਭਿ ਆਪਿ ਬਨਾਏ ॥  
ਅਪੁਨੀ ਕੀਮਤਿ ਆਪੇ ਪਾਏ ॥  
ਹਰਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਦੂਜਾ ਨਾਹੀ ਕੋਇ ॥  
ਸਰਬ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਸੋਇ ॥

ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਰਵਿਆ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ॥  
 ਭਏ ਪ੍ਰਗਾਸ ਸਾਧ ਕੈ ਸੰਗ ॥  
 ਰਚਿ ਰਚਨਾ ਅਪਨੀ ਕਲ ਧਾਰੀ ॥  
 ਅਨਿਕ ਬਾਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, pp. 287-88)

He is *nirgun* and He is *sargun* too. By manifesting Himself in the creation He has fascinated the world. He has created all the wondrous things. He alone knows His worth. There is no other like Him. He, the One, is within all. He is in all forms and colours, like warp and woof. He becomes manifest through the *Sādb* (Guru). Having created the universe, He has infused it with His power. Nanak is many a time sacrifice to Him.

### 8.17. *Ashtpadi* 19(8)

ਏਕੋ ਜਪਿ ਏਕੋ ਸਾਲਾਹਿ ॥  
 ਏਕੁ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਮਨ ਆਹਿ ॥  
 ਏਕਸ ਕੇ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਉ ਅਨੰਤ ॥  
 ਮਨਿ ਤਨਿ ਜਾਪਿ ਏਕ ਭਗਵੰਤ ॥  
 ਏਕੋ ਏਕੁ ਏਕੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਪਿ ॥  
 ਪੂਰਨ ਪੂਰਿ ਰਹਿਓ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਬਿਆਪਿ ॥  
 ਅਨਿਕ ਬਿਸਥਾਰ ਏਕ ਤੇ ਭਏ ॥  
 ਏਕੁ ਅਰਾਧਿ ਪਰਾਛਤ ਗਏ ॥  
 ਮਨ ਤਨ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਏਕੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਰਾਤਾ ॥  
 ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਕੁ ਜਾਤਾ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, p. 289)

Recite only the One (Name) and sing praises of the One only. Remember the only One and lodge Him alone in the heart. Sing the praises of the only Infinite Lord. Think of the only One with your mind and body. One and only One, God alone is the Lord. The Perfect One pervades everywhere. The only One has expanded into many. All sins depart by remembering the only One. The One Lord has imbued my body and mind. Through the Guru's grace, Nanak has realized the One.

### 8.18. *Shalok*

ਫਿਰਤ ਫਿਰਤ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਆਇਆ ਪਰਿਆ ਤਉ ਸਰਨਾਇ ॥  
 ਨਾਨਕ ਕੀ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਅਪਨੀ ਭਗਤੀ ਲਾਇ ॥੧॥ (SGGS, p. 289)

After much wandering I have come to take refuge with You.  
Nanak's supplication, my Lord, is that he may appropriate  
loving devotion for You.

### 8.19. *Sbalok*

ਸਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰਗੁਨ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧੀ ਆਪਿ॥

ਆਪਨ ਕੀਆ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਫਿਰਿ ਜਾਪਿ॥੧॥ (SGGS, p. 290)

Both *sargun* and *nirgun* is the Formless Himself. He Himself  
was in meditation in the void (*surin*). He created Himself and  
He meditates on Himself.

### 8.20. *Ashtpadī* 23(1)

ਸੰਤਸੰਗਿ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਡੀਠਾ॥

ਨਾਮੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕਾ ਲਾਗਾ ਮੀਠਾ॥

ਸਗਲ ਸਮਿਗ੍ਰੀ ਏਕਸੁ ਘਟ ਮਾਹਿ॥

ਅਨਿਕ ਰੰਗ ਨਾਨਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਾਹਿ॥

ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ॥

ਦੇਹੀ ਮਹਿ ਇਸ ਕਾ ਬਿਸਮੁ॥

ਸੁੰਨ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਅਨਹਤ ਤਹ ਨਾਦ॥

ਕਹਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਅਚਰਜ ਬਿਸਮਾਦ॥

ਤਿਨਿ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਜਿਸੁ ਆਪਿ ਦਿਖਾਏ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਤਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਸੋਝੀ ਪਾਏ॥੧॥

(SGGS, p. 293)

I have seen the Lord in *sat-sangat*. His Name tastes good.  
All the things that we see have sprung from the One. The  
multifarious sights that we see represent the Name which is  
the nectar of the nine treasures. Its abode is the human body.  
The void and the unstruck music are there. It is a wondrous  
marvel that cannot be described. Only he sees it whom the  
Lord shows it. Such a man, Nanak, attains understanding.

### 8.21. *Ashtpadī* 24(8)

ਜਿਸੁ ਮਨਿ ਬਸੈ ਸੁਨੈ ਲਾਇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਜਨ ਆਵੈ ਹਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚੀਤਿ॥

ਜਨਮ ਮਰਨ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦੂਖੁ ਨਿਵਾਰੈ॥

ਦੁਲਭ ਦੇਹ ਤਤਕਾਲ ਉਧਾਰੈ॥

ਨਿਰਮਲ ਸੋਭਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਬਾਨੀ॥

ਏਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਨੀ॥



ਦੂਖ ਰੋਗ ਬਿਨਸੇ ਭੈ ਭਰਮ ॥

ਸਾਧ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਕਰਮ ॥

ਸਭ ਤੇ ਉਚ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਸੋਭਾ ਬਨੀ ॥

ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹ ਗੁਣਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ॥੮॥

(SGGS, p. 296)

He in whose mind the *Sukhmanī* is lodged, hears it and loves it. He remembers the Lord-God. His suffering due to transmigration comes to an end. His human birth (that gives him the rare opportunity) is redeemed. Pure is his repute and sweet is his speech. The One Name absorbs his mind. His suffering, disease, fear and illusion vanish. His spotless conduct gives him the reputation of a *sādh*. His praise is the highest. This is why, Nanak, this is called the *Sukhmanī* (Jewel of Bliss).

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# Index

- Abchal Nagar 152  
 Abdali, Ahmad Shah 201  
*abbai-dān* 122, 129  
*ād purkh* 76  
*Ādi Bīr* 189  
*Ādi Bīr Bāre* 189  
*Ādi Granth* 30, 32-34, 163, 168, 169,  
 187, 191-93, 196, 199, 202  
 Afghan 48  
*abankār/bankār* 100, 101, 110, 153,  
 180  
*Ajamal* 170  
 Ajapal Singh, Bābā 195  
 Akāl Takht 203, 204  
 Akālīs 204  
*Alāhaniān* 125  
 Allah 47  
 Amar Das, Gurū 43, 49, 54, 56, 62,  
 66, 73, 83, 90, 95, 96, 102, 103,  
 107-110, 114, 115, 119, 123, 125,  
 140-45, 147, 148, 161, 165, 167-  
 69, 171, 178, 180-82, 185, 190,  
 205, 239-41, 247  
*amrāpad* 122  
*amrit* 92  
*amrit-bānī* 93, 116  
*amrit-nām* 97  
*Anand* 125, 142, 143, 167, 213, 239,  
 242, 246, 247  
 Anandghan 29  
 Anandpur 192  
*anbhai pad* 180  
*anbhau nagar* 117  
 Angad, Gurū 42, 48, 62, 72, 83, 90,  
 95, 102, 107, 108, 114, 119, 123,  
 137-40, 158, 160, 161, 167, 177,  
 178, 179, 181, 190, 215  
*anbad bānī* 88  
*anbad shabad* 81, 88  
*Aphbramsba* 159  
*ārātā/ārātī* 52, 167, 174, 224  
*ardās* (supplication) 101, 119, 227,  
 250, 252, 259  
 Arjan, Gurū 29, 36, 45, 49, 57, 63,  
 67, 75, 77, 78, 84, 86, 97, 98, 101,  
 104, 105, 112, 116, 120, 121, 124,  
 125, 134, 142, 143, 149-56, 158,  
 159, 161, 166, 167, 170, 171, 173,  
 178, 181, 182, 185, 189, 190, 192,  
 205, 206, 210, 220, 223, 239, 242,  
 249  
*Āsā dī Vār* 46, 63, 70, 71, 80, 213,  
 225-28  
*āsā māhi nirās* 82  
*Atbarvana* 137, 235  
*aukbad* 115  
*auliā* 64, 67  
 Aurangzeb 131  
*avadhūt* 60  
  
*Bābur-bānī* 47  
 Badan Singh, Giānī 29, 30  
*bairāg* 61, 114, 248  
*bairāgī(s)* 107, 108  
 Balmik 170  
 Balvand 190  
*bandagī* 80  
*bānī* 74, 80, 82, 86, 88-93, 95, 97,  
 101, 104, 110, 111, 113, 115, 118,  
 121, 137, 138, 140, 142, 145, 146,

- 149, 152, 155, 165, 166, 197, 241,  
245-47  
*bānū-shabad* 93  
*Baṁno Bīr* 191  
Basant 143, 144  
Beni 169, 170, 174, 179  
*bhagat(s)/bhakta(s)* 49, 56, 57, 78,  
108-13, 129, 151, 161, 169, 170,  
190, 205, 209, 244, 256  
Bhagat Bāṇi 33, 34, 161, 168, 169,  
171, 177, 183, 184, 208  
*bhagti* 51, 54, 61, 78, 79, 81, 100,  
101, 103-105, 109, 110, 113, 115,  
121, 128, 129, 140, 143, 146, 165  
*bhagti/bhakti-jog* 60, 181  
*bhai* 104, 109  
*bhajan* 130, 131  
Bhalla, Sarup Das 194, 199, 200, 211  
Bhangu, Ratan Singh 194, 200  
Bhaṭṭs 161, 178, 182, 184  
*bhau* 104  
Bhikhan 173  
*birbā* 106  
Brahma(s) 51, 75, 80, 141  
*brahm-giānī* 121, 250  
*brahmachāris* 113  
Brahman(s) 38, 39, 41, 43-45, 47,  
50-53, 65, 66, 137, 145, 226  
Brahmanical dispensation 57  
Brahmanical rites 183  
Brahmanical system(s) 228, 229  
Brahmanical tradition 215  
Brijinder Singh, Maharaja 30  
Buddhs 71  
  
*chaṇḍāk(s)* 44, 150, 250  
*chalūlā* 44  
*chāṣāl* 116  
Chaturbhuj 29  
*chaukā* 39, 56, 229  
*chaukī* 155  
Chaupā Singh *Rabit-Nāmā* 197  
Chaupa Singh, Bhāi 194  
*chauthā pad/suṁ* 82, 98  
*chauthī padvī* 141  
*Chhaṁt* 247  
Chhibber, Kesar Singh 194, 198, 211  
*chirī vichbuṁne* 106  
Christianity 206  
cosmic ages 216  
creation 246  
Cunningham, J.D. 202, 204, 212  
  
Dal Khalsa 203  
*dān* 82, 118, 119, 135  
*dars* 79, 135  
*darshan* 87, 110  
Darshan Singh 36  
*darveshes* 63, 66, 67, 208  
*Dasam Granth* 159, 202, 203  
*Dasveṁ Pāṭshāb Kā Granth* 202  
*dayā* 75, 79, 249  
*dhāḍhī* 119, 120, 141, 147  
Dhanna 169, 170, 173, 174  
Dharam Singh 205, 212  
*dharm(s)/dharma* 53, 94, 98, 129,  
143, 148, 155, 181, 214, 237, 247,  
252  
*dharm khaṇḍ* 125, 215  
*Dharm Rāj* 218  
*dharmśāl* 116, 118, 215, 219  
*dhiān* 89  
Dhillon, Balwant Singh 36, 210  
Dhir Mal 192  
Dhruv 170  
*dhur kī bāṇī* 93  
Divine Name 228  
Divine Order 207, 209, 216  
*dubidhā* 94, 111, 114  
*dubāgan(s)* 40, 43  
*dukh* 78  
*durmat* 61, 118, 122, 252  
  
*ekaṅkāṛ* 76, 88  
  
*faqīrs* 67  
*farmān* 77  
five *khaṇḍ*s 215

- Gajindra 170  
 Ganda Singh 193, 195, 196, 211  
*Ganika* 170  
 Gaura Singh 212  
*Gāyatri* 50, 229  
 gender 207, 225  
 Ghulam Muhiyuddin 194  
*giān* 41, 61, 84, 85, 89, 127, 128, 137, 166, 226, 239  
*giānis* 94  
*giān kbānḍ* 125  
 Giān Singh, Giāni 29, 194  
 Gill, Harjeet Singh 33  
 Gobind Singh, Guru 158, 189, 192, 193, 195-200, 203  
 God's attributes (*agam, agochar, ajūnī, akāl, anītarjāmī, atbāh, be-anī, bhai-bhaijan, dātā, dīn-dayāl, kartā, kartār, mūrati, nīrānkār, nīrbhau, nīrgun, nīrvair, sadā-budūrā, sukhdāta*) 73, 75, 76, 102, 124, 149, 151, 209, 241, 258, 259;  
   – *bbānā* 72, 75, 77, 78, 80, 102, 104, 142, 145, 208, 249;  
   – creation 227;  
   – fatherhood 207;  
   – *bukam* 48, 55, 56, 63, 69-73, 75, 77-79, 86, 92, 100, 102, 103, 105, 106, 108, 110, 113, 123, 138, 147, 214, 226, 240, 249  
*Goiṇdvāl Pothīs* 190  
 Gopal Singh 31, 35  
*gopīs* 232, 233  
 Goswamy, B.N. 212  
 Grewal, J.S. 186, 212  
 Grewal, Reeta 211  
 Gulab Singh, Kavi 194  
 Guninder Kaur, 31, 34, 35  
*Gunvāntī* 167  
 Gurbakhsh Singh 212  
*Gurbāṇī* 69, 89, 91-93, 98, 101, 107, 115, 140, 142, 149, 161, 166, 169, 177, 183, 184, 192, 213, 249  
*Gurbāṇī Viākaran* 159  
 Gurdas, Bhāi 29  
*gurdwāra* 113  
*Gurmat* 61, 110, 112, 135, 205  
*Gurmatās* 201  
*Gurmukh(s)* 81, 108, 109, 111-113, 141, 145, 231  
*Gurmukh Pañth* 61, 134  
*gurmukhī* 148, 158  
 Gurnam Kaur 205, 212  
*Gurprasādi* 75  
*Gur-Sabbhā* 114  
*gur-saṅgat* 114, 135  
*gursanī-sabbhā* 135  
*Gur-Shabad* 92, 182, 196  
*Gursikh(s)* 108, 109, 111, 140, 145, 153  
 Guru 50, 52, 53, 56, 66, 69, 72, 74, 78, 80-86, 88, 91, 93, 95-98, 105, 108, 110, 111, 113-15, 117, 119, 124, 129, 135, 138-40, 143, 146, 156, 165, 219, 221, 225, 228, 230, 239, 241-244, 250, 253, 257, 258  
*guru(s)* 53, 66, 82, 83, 134, 207  
*Guru Granth Sāhib* 30-34, 153, 154, 158-61, 164, 166-68, 171-73, 176-78, 182-84, 189, 190, 193-95, 197-99, 201, 203-206, 208-210, 213  
*Guru Har Sabāi Pothī* 190  
 Guru Khalsa 198, 203  
 Guru Pañth 193, 197, 198, 200, 203, 204  
 Guruship 139, 194-99, 202  
*Gurvāk* 92  
  
*bāṇī* 67  
*balemi rāj* 134, 153, 156, 186  
*baqīqat* 67  
*barams* 46, 48, 227  
 Harimaṇdar Sāhib 151, 152, 201, 203, 204  
 Harji 29  
 Harkishan Singh, Bawa 31, 34



- baumai* 41, 47, 50, 61, 81, 82, 85,  
 87, 89, 90, 94-96, 100, 102-104,  
 109-12, 122, 130, 131, 138, 144,  
 170, 228, 234  
*Hindu(s)* 37, 67, 206, 207, 228, 229  
*bukamnāmās/bukamnāme* 203,  
 204, 212  
*Hukumat Singh* 212  
  
*Islam* 37, 184, 206, 208, 209  
*Islamic beliefs and practices* 63  
*Islamic epithets for God* 79  
*Islamic mysticism* 208  
*Islamic tradition* 209, 215  
*isnān* 82, 118, 119, 135  
  
*jagat jalāndā* 144, 205, 210  
*Jaggi, Rattan Singh* 211  
*Jai Singh* 212  
*Jaidev* 169, 170, 175, 176, 179  
*Jain monks* 37, 62, 148  
*jajmān* 41, 229  
*Janak* 181  
*Janak-rāj* 181  
*Janamsākhīs* 158, 164  
*janeū* (sacred thread) 38, 39, 236  
*jaṅgam(s)* 61, 62, 130  
*Japu/Japuji* 37, 58, 69, 71, 80, 88,  
 100, 107, 125, 159, 164, 167, 213,  
 215, 220, 226  
*Jawahir Mall, Sain Sahib Bhagat* 195  
*jīvan-mukta* 100, 122  
*jīvan-mukti* 126  
*jīvan-pad* 122  
*jīvat marnā* 82  
*joban* 100  
*Jodh Singh, Bhāi* 29, 34  
*jog* 59, 182  
*jogī(s)* 61, 62, 66, 82, 129, 130, 137,  
 148, 208, 215;  
 –ideas and practices 58;  
 –terminology 60  
*John Malcolm* 202, 204, 212  
  
*Kabir* 169-73, 179, 183  
*Kāhn* 233  
*Kaliyuga* 46, 95, 125, 137, 139, 143,  
 144, 148, 154, 155, 179, 181, 182,  
 228, 235  
*kalmā* 64  
*kām* 100, 126-28, 153, 180  
*Kansa* 74  
*kañt (sauh)* 43  
*Kapur Singh* 34  
*karam khañḍ* 125  
*karm* 72, 79, 82, 94, 98, 143, 181,  
 226, 249  
*karm-kāñḍ* 91, 240  
*Kartārpur Pothī/Bīr* 168, 177, 189-  
 92  
*kasumbh* 44, 103  
*kathā* 101, 115, 116, 119, 164  
*Khalsa Pañth* 203  
*Khatrī(s)* 38, 39, 43-45, 137, 145, 229  
*Khazan Singh* 30  
*Khivī (Mātā)* 177  
*Khushwant Singh* 34  
*kirpā (nadar, prasād)* 69, 70, 72, 75,  
 79, 80, 82, 101, 128, 226, 249  
*Kirpal Singh* 20, 212  
*kirtan-nām* 97  
*kīrtan* 101, 116-18, 163, 164, 182  
*kirpā* 98  
*Koer Singh* 194, 198, 211  
*Kohli, Surindar Singh* 31, 35, 211  
*Krishna* 53, 54, 56, 74, 179, 229, 232  
*krodh* 100, 126-28, 153, 180  
*Kshatriyas* 53  
*kuchajji* 40, 167  
*Kurukshetra* 148  
  
*Lakshman Singh, Bhagat* 30  
*lāl* 101  
*langar* 147, 177  
*Latif, Syed Muhammad* 194  
*Lāvān* 125, 213, 247;  
 –marriage ceremony 124

- Lehna 177  
 liberated-in-life (*muktā*) 100, 121, 127, 131, 250  
 liberation 121, 128, 152, 215, 216, 219, 226, 249  
 liberation-in-life (*muktī*) 88, 100, 102, 120, 121, 123, 126, 130, 206  
*lobb* 100, 153, 180  
  
 Macauliffe, Max Arthur 30, 35, 194  
 Machhandar 59  
*mabūd* 65  
 Mahesh(es) 51, 76, 80  
*mabzar* 155  
*majūb* 44  
*malechb* 39  
 Malhotra, Karamjit K. 211  
*mamiā* 100, 102, 127, 130, 131  
 Mani Singh, Bhāi 29  
 Manmohan Singh 31  
*manmukh(s)* 54, 79, 112, 113, 138, 143, 226  
 Mann, Gurinder Singh 32, 35, 163, 164, 168, 185-87, 190-93, 210  
*manītar* 78, 84, 85, 87, 145  
*mā'rifat* 67  
*Mārū Soble* 154  
*maun-dhārīs* 62  
*māyā* 55, 58, 62, 66, 72, 74, 81, 89, 94, 96, 100, 101, 103, 104, 120, 123, 124, 126-28, 130, 131, 142, 143, 150, 173, 231, 240, 241, 254  
 McLeod, W.H. 211  
 Miharban 29  
*mob* 100, 126, 153, 180, 226  
*monīs* 113  
*MS 1192* 191  
*MS 1245* 190  
 Mughal administration 152  
 Mughals 48  
*muktī parīb* 127, 128  
*mūlmanītar* 69, 213  
*mullā(s)* 37, 62, 63, 65, 67, 207, 208  
*Murūdāvaṇī* 160  
  
*mūrati* 76  
 Musalmān(s) 37, 42, 64, 65, 67, 208, 228, 233, 234  
 Muslim(s) 37, 42, 46, 205-207, 209, 227  
 Muslim beliefs 225  
  
 Nabha, Bhāi Kahn Singh 30, 195  
*nād(s)* 58, 80, 89, 165  
*nām* 48, 66, 81, 82, 90, 93, 118, 119, 135, 141, 153, 165 (see also Name)  
 Namdev 169-73, 179, 183  
 Nāmdhārīs 195, 202  
 Nāmdhārī, Bhāi Kala Singh 195  
*nām-dharm* 69, 98  
*Nām-simran* 106  
*namāz* 64  
 Name 39, 51, 52, 55, 56, 58, 65, 69, 70, 78, 85, 86, 88, 91, 93, 95-98, 101-103, 108, 110, 113, 115, 117, 119, 120, 138, 142, 146, 147, 165, 166, 180, 182, 210, 214, 218, 220, 221, 225, 229, 239, 243, 249, 251, 252 (see also *nām*)  
 Nanak, Guru 29, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 48, 50, 51, 53, 54, 58-67, 69, 72, 82-84, 86, 88, 93, 94, 101, 103, 105-108, 114, 122, 123, 125, 132, 134, 135, 137, 139, 140, 143, 147, 153, 154, 156, 158-61, 164, 165, 167, 169, 171, 177-79, 181, 185, 189, 190, 192, 205-207, 209, 215, 220, 222, 223, 225, 228-30, 247  
 Nand Lal, Bhāi 194, 196, 197  
 Narain Singh 31  
 Narotam, Pandit Tara Singh 29  
 Nāths 71  
*nindaks* (opposition) 149, 155, 255  
*nirāṅkāṛ* 73, 102  
*nirbhāi/nirbhau pad* 122, 126, 129  
  
*Oaṅkāṛ* 167, 205

Oberoi, Harjót 202, 211

Oberoi, J.P.S. 33

*pad nirbān* 126, 129

*pādhā* 55, 56, 124

*pāndā* 56

*pandit(s)* 38, 42, 50-52, 54, 55, 62,

94, 139, 215, 229

*pandit-jotki* 56

*pardesi* 103

Parmanand 176

*parm-pad* 122

Partap Singh, Bābā 195

*parupkār* 107, 210

*parupkārī* 125, 146, 210

Pashaura Singh 32, 36, 164, 169,  
186, 187

Pathans 235

Patna 203

*pāshbāb(s)* 48, 49

*patt* 110

*pattal* 41

pilgrimage 148

*piṇḍ* 41

Pipa 175

*pin(s)* 37, 63, 64, 67, 207, 208

pluralism 205

*Pothī* 189

Prahlad 169

Prahlad Singh (Prahlad Rai), Bhāi  
194, 198, 202

*prasād* 72, 75, 79

*prem* 104

*Prem Sumārg* 197, 211

Punjabi 159

Puran Singh 29, 35

Puranas 42, 51, 70, 176

*Purātan Janamsākhi* 189

*qāzi(s)* 37, 47, 62, 63, 65-67, 207,  
208, 215

*qudrat* 77

*Qur'ān* 64, 67, 208

*Rabb* 208

Radhakrishnan, S. 29

*rāg(s)* 165, 218, 243;

– *Āsā, Bairārī, Basant, Bhairo,*  
*Bilāwal, Dhanāsari, Gaurī,*  
*Gaurī Deepakī, Gaurī Pūrabī,*  
*Gujrī, Jaijāvanī, Kedārā, Mālī*  
*Gaurā, Mārū, Prabhātī, Ramkalī,*  
*Soraṭhī, Sri, Sūbi, Tilang* 80, 81,  
88, 97, 105, 106, 109, 111, 112,  
155, 162, 165, 166, 220, 222, 223,  
247;

– *Rāg* units 161;

– *rāginīs* 218

*Rāg Mālā* 160, 184

*Rabirās* 159

*rahit* 256

*Rabītnāmā(s)/Rabītnāme* 194, 196-  
198, 202, 211

Rai Balvand 161, 167, 177, 178, 184  
*raī'yat* 47

*rāj* 100, 182

*rāj-jog* 107, 112, 121, 124, 179, 181,  
182

Rām/Rama (Rājā) 53, 54, 179, 229,  
232, 233

*Rām-rāj* 152

*Rāmkalī kī Vār* 161, 177, 178, 184

Ram Das, Guru 43-45, 49, 57, 62, 74,  
75, 84, 90, 96, 103, 111, 120, 123,  
124, 142, 143, 145-47, 149, 159-  
161, 164, 165, 167, 170, 171, 178,  
180-82, 190, 196, 210, 220, 222,  
223, 239, 242, 247

Ram Rai 192

Ram Singh, Bābā 195, 202

Ramanand 176

Ramdas Sarovar 151

Ramdaspur 152

Ranjit Singh 212

Ravidas 169, 170, 172, 173, 179, 183

*razā* 70, 72, 75, 77, 100, 138, 141,  
208, 214, 227

*rūp* 100

- sachch kharīṇ* 125  
*sachchī saṅgat* 114  
 Sada Nand 29  
*sadā-subāgan* 40, 43, 45, 90, 109  
*Sadd* 161, 163, 182, 184  
*sādh(s)* 66, 80, 108, 111-17, 151, 250, 252, 253, 258  
*sādh-sabbā* 114, 135  
*sādh-saṅg* 98, 105, 116, 117-19  
*sādh-saṅgat* 104, 114, 116-18, 120, 150, 151, 166, 176  
*sādhiks* 62, 82  
 Sadhna 175  
*sādhs* (Sikhs) 127, 128  
*sādhūs* 84, 113  
*sādiqs* 63  
*sabaj* 91, 178  
*sabaj-jog* 60, 179  
 Sahib Singh 29, 31, 35, 159, 185, 189, 190, 210, 215, 225  
*saimbbau* 76  
 Sain 169, 170, 173, 175  
 Sainapat 194, 196, 198, 211  
*Sākhi Rāhī Kī* 197  
*sāliks* 63  
*Sālok Sahskriti* 160  
*saṅdhyā* 56  
*saṅgat* 83, 92, 101, 105, 106, 112, 114-16, 135, 141, 142, 146, 179, 180, 182, 200  
*saṅt(s)* 66, 105, 108, 111-17, 120, 121, 129, 130, 143, 150, 151, 169, 183, 222, 225, 243, 246, 248  
*saṅt-sabbā* 114, 116, 135  
*saṅt-saṅg* 116  
*saṅt-saṅgat* 118  
 Sant Singh, Munshi 194  
 Santokh Singh, Bhāi 29, 194  
*sanyāsī(s)* 61-63, 113, 130, 148, 174  
*saram kharīṇ* 125  
 Sarbat Khalsa 197  
*Sarbat Saṅgat* 197  
*sargun* 73, 75, 258, 259  
*sarm* 237  
 Sarovar 152  
*sat-nām* 97  
*sat-saṅg* 116  
*sat-saṅgat* 92, 114-16, 118, 119, 165, 222, 260  
*Sat Sri Akāl Purkh Jī kā Khālsā* 203  
*satī* 144  
*satt* 76  
 Satta 161, 167, 177, 178, 184, 190  
*sauh* 43  
 Semitic books (*Kateb*) 42, 67, 70, 215  
 sequence of 31 *Rāgs* 160  
*sev* 107  
*sevak(s)* 88, 108, 112, 120, 145, 181, 256  
 Sewaram Singh 30  
*shabad(s)* 52, 53, 55, 56, 61, 66, 69, 72, 75, 81-83, 88-92, 94, 96, 97, 101, 102, 104, 106, 109-111, 114, 115, 123, 126, 135, 137, 140-42, 144, 148, 149, 151, 153, 155, 165, 179-82, 197, 240-43, 245, 248, 249  
*Shabad-Bānī* 105, 197  
*Shabad-Guru* 82, 93  
*Shabdārth Sri Guru Granth Sāhib Jī* 68, 99, 132, 133, 156, 157, 187, 188, 212  
 Shackle, C. 185  
*shabāds* 63  
*shaikh(s)* 37, 63, 65-67, 207, 208  
 Shaikh Farid 169, 172, 183, 184, 209  
 Shaivas 37  
 Shaktas 37  
 Shakti 241  
*sharī'at* 63, 67, 233  
 Shastra(s) 50, 51, 55, 86, 229, 251  
 Sheena Pall 211  
 Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) 204  
 Shiva 141, 241  
*shrādhs* 41, 226, 229  
 Shudra(s) 38, 43, 44, 53, 137, 145

- siddh(s) 62, 71, 82, 105, 134  
*Siddh Gost* 81, 82, 122, 167, 205  
*sifat-sālāb* 135  
 Sikh(s) 54, 55, 57, 102, 107-109, 111,  
     112, 119, 134, 140, 142, 145, 146,  
     148, 150, 178, 181, 182, 210, 240-  
     242, 244, 246, 257  
 Sikh *bhagti* 105  
 Sikh Pañth 68, 156  
*Sikh-sabbā* 135, 206  
*singī* 208  
 Singh Sabha Movement 30  
*sirpāo* 113  
 Sita 233  
*Smriti(s)* 55, 86, 251  
*So-Dar* 159, 167  
*So-Purkh* 74, 159, 167  
*sobilā* 40, 159, 167  
*Srī Guru Granth Sāhib Darpan* 159  
*suchajī* 40, 167  
 Sudama 170  
*Sūfi(s)* 64, 65, 183  
*sūbhā* 101  
*sukh* 78, 214  
 Sukha Singh 194, 199, 200, 211  
*Sukhmanī* 167, 213, 249, 260  
*sultān(s)* 46, 48, 49, 77, 106  
 Sunder, Bābā 161, 182  
*sunni* 259  
*sunni-maṇḍal* 107  
 Sumer Singh, Bawa 194  
 Suri, Chhan Lal 194  
*sūtak* (pollution) 39, 43, 56, 229,  
     237, 238  
 Takht Damdama 192  
 Talib, Gurbachan Singh 31, 35  
*Tankhānāmā* 197  
*tapsis* 113  
 Taran Singh, Professor 29, 35  
*tarikāt* 67  
 Taru Singh, Bhāi 200  
 Tegh Bahadur, Guru 101, 126-28,  
     130-33, 160, 161, 192, 206, 209  
 Teja Singh, Professor 29, 31, 185  
 Teja Singh of Bhasaur 187  
*tīratb(s)* 52, 56, 80, 85, 108, 143, 214  
 Toynbee, Arnold 29  
 traditional forms 166  
*trikuṭī* 81  
 Trilochan 170, 174, 179  
 Trilochan Singh 34  
 true song 246  
 Trumpf, Ernest 30, 35  
*turiavasthā* 123  
 Turk(s) 67, 235, 236  
 Turko-Afghan rule 46, 228  
*udās* 131  
*ulamā* 64, 65  
*Vaishnava(s)* 41, 53, 54, 57, 169,  
     183, 229, 254  
*Vaishnava bhagats/bhaktas* 168, 184  
*Vaishnava bhagti/bhakti* 105, 175,  
     226  
*varna(s)* (caste, *jāt*, *jāti*, outcaste,  
     *Sūd*, Vais, Vaishya) 38, 43-45, 53,  
     95, 100, 110, 140, 145, 150, 207,  
     225, 230  
*varnadharma* 45  
*Vārs* 167  
*Vārs* of Bhāi Gurdas 158  
*Ved/Veds/Veda/Vedas* 51, 54, 55,  
     70, 80, 88, 89, 137, 138, 176, 215,  
     235, 255  
 Vir Singh, Bhāi 29, 30, 35  
 Vishnu(s) 50, 51, 54, 75, 80, 141, 179  
 World-Preceptor Nanak 179